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ST. PETERSBURG AND LONDON

1852–1864

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ST. PETERSBURG AND LONDON

IN THE

YEARS 1852–1864

REMINISCENCES

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COUNT CHARLES FREDERICK VITZTHUM VON ECKSTÆDT

LATE SAXON MINISTER AT THE COURT OF ST. JAMES'

EDITED WITH A PREFACE BY

HENRY REEVE, C.B., D.C.L.

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ac

TRANSLATED BY EDWARD FAIRFAX TAYLOR

IN TWO VOLUMES—VOL. I.

LONDON
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1887

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PREFACE

OF

THE EDITOR.

In compliance with the wish of an old and valued friend my name appears on the title-page of these volumes to authenticate (if that were necessary) their contents, and to recommend them to English readers as a faithful record of the political transactions of an eventful period. But I hasten to add that my share in this publication is a very slight one. The translation has been executed by other and very competent hands, with the assistance of the author, and the only merit I can claim is that I saw at once the importance of the work, and took some steps to introduce it to the British public in our own language.

Twenty years ago it would have required no such introduction. At that time the members of the diplomatic body at the Court of St. James formed a con-

spicuous and active element in the society of London. The names of Van der Weyer, Azeglio, Lavradio, Bunsen, Brunnow, Colloredo, and Apponyi were familiar to us as household words, and they contributed not a little, by their hospitality and their conversation, to the pleasures of social life. Amongst these eminent persons Count Vitzthum occupied for many years a conspicuous and honourable place. No foreign minister had identified himself more thoroughly with the manners and tastes of this country. None was better qualified by the intimacies he had formed and the confidence he inspired to unravel the skein of our party contests, and to explain our relations with the other Powers of Europe.

As the Minister of Saxony, who had served with distinction at the Courts of Berlin and Vienna during the critical events of 1846 and 1849,[1] and was animated by the warmest attachments to his native country, whose future he foresaw and predicted, Count Vitzthum

[1] Count Vitzthum's recollections of Berlin and Vienna in these years, when he foretold the approach of the Revolution in Prussia, and was an eye-witness of the tremendous convulsion in Austria, being a resident in Vienna during the siege of that capital by Prince Windischgratz, have been published in Germany, but are not yet translated in this country. The twelfth chapter of the present work, containing theaccount of the author's interviews with Prince Metternich in 1858, has been borrowed with his permission from the former volume, and is inserted here.

acquired in an especial degree the confidence of the Prince Consort, who was never more in earnest than when he spoke with a German of the politics of Germany. The conversations of the Prince form one of the most valuable portions of these reminiscences. .

The observations of a foreign statesman, well acquainted with the institutions of what the Emperor Napoleon III. called this 'curious country,' and not less conversant with the politics of Europe, are of especial value, because they tend to correct the insular views which Englishmen and English statesmen are apt to take of events which may alter the condition of the world. That is precisely the position in which Count Vitzthum was placed during his long residence in England; and for this reason his reminiscences include a number of details which passed unperceived by those who were more immediately engrossed by the domestic affairs of the nation during the same period.

It will occur to some readers that these reminiscences relate to the same period of time and to the same historical events as another 'Journal of the Reign of Queen Victoria' which it has been my privilege recently to lay before the public. The two works appear to me to be to some extent complementary.

Mr. Greville had opportunities which no foreign observer could possess of recording the personal opinions and actions of his friends and contemporaries in this country; but a Foreign Minister in London was enabled to take a wider survey of the relations of Great Britain with the continental States. The transactions are the same, but they are related from an opposite point of view.

Count Vitzthum's short residence in St. Petersburg as Saxon Chargé d'Affaires in the years 1852 and 1853 formed an appropriate introduction to his subsequent appointment in London. For it was in St. Petersburg that the storm originated which was about to break the long peace of Europe, and the young Saxon Minister had unusual opportunities of observing the character and disposition of the Emperor Nicholas, to whom alone that calamity is attributable. It is impossible to doubt, after reading Count Vitzthum's record of the language which he heard from the lips of the Czar, that his ill-regulated passions and ambition were the direct causes of the Crimean War; and it was the fortune of the Saxon Minister to trace at the Courts of the Western Allies the effects of the intemperate policy of Russia in the following years.

To these remarks I shall only add the dates of

Count Vitzthum's diplomatic appointments, and my own recollections of his first appearance at the Court of St. James, and of the firm footing he speedily acquired in the society of London.

This selection of private and confidential letters forms part of the political correspondence of Count Vitzthum to Baron von Beust, Minister of Foreign Affairs to the King of Saxony between the years 1849 and 1866.

Count Vitzthum was born in 1819, in the same year as the Queen and the Prince Consort. He presented his credentials as Saxon Minister to Her Majesty on June 13, 1853. He was appointed Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in 1857, a Privy Councillor of the King of Saxony in January 1865, and he remained in London until 1866, when the battle of Sadowa put an end to his mission. He therefore witnessed, as Saxon Minister at the Court of St. James, the beginning and the end of the Crimean War, the Indian Mutiny, the Italian campaign of 1859, the peace of Villafranca and the Italian Revolution, all the different phases of the Western alliance, the American Civil War, the Danish complications and the war which followed, the death of the Prince Consort, of Lord Palmerston and others—in one word, all the incidents

and convulsions which happened in Europe during these eventful fourteen years.

On his arrival the Count was still looking so young that Lord Palmerston mistook him for an attaché. A year afterwards Count Walewski, then French Ambassador, called him one of the best informed men in London. Mr. Disraeli shared this opinion, saying, 'If I want to know something about Austria and Germany, I do not ask the Austrian Ambassador nor the Prussian, but the Saxon Minister.' When, in 1866, he took leave of one of our Cabinet Ministers, this statesman said, laughing, 'Well, I think it quite time for you to go, because you are beginning knowing us too well.'

The private correspondence published in these volumes is by no means complete. The author did not keep copies or extracts of all the private letters he wrote, and those letters were only supplementary to his official despatches. The minutes of these despatches, with all the papers of the Legation, have been given up to the Saxon Government, and are preserved in the State Paper Office at Dresden. They form, therefore, no part of this publication; and Count Vitzthum was frequently absent from London during the parliamentary recess, employed either in special missions or

travelling on the Continent. To fill up these blanks some private letters addressed to other persons, a few autograph notes from distinguished people, the Prince Consort for instance, have been inserted in chronological order, and some political recollections have been added. Reviewing the fourteen years he passed in England these memoirs are still incomplete, for it was not the intention of the author to write his autobiography, still less the history of the period. He mentions only briefly the facts and impressions which came to his personal knowledge. The author being by birth neither a Whig nor a Tory, neither English nor French, neither Russian nor Italian, neither Austrian nor Prussian, his recollections are as free as possible from party feelings and national prejudices. He had no other object in view but to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, in order to keep his Government as well informed as possible on European politics. Though he may have very decided opinions of his own, he scarcely puts them forward, preferring always to give faithfully the opinions of others. These 'others,' whose *ipsissima verba* are often quoted, are the leading men of the day. The events, therefore, are not so much commented upon by the representative of a minor German Court as by the Prince Consort, by Lord Derby, Lord Palmerston,

Lord Russell, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Disraeli, and the most eminent statesmen of the time. Those, therefore, who like to look behind the curtain of our parliamentary struggles and diplomatic transactions will find in these volumes facts not to be gathered either from newspapers or from blue-books.

HENRY REEVE.

March 1887.

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ST. PETERSBURG AND LONDON

CHAPTER I.

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Arrival at St. Petersburg—First Impressions—Prince Menschikoff—Position of Count Nesselrode—General von Rochow—Private and confidential Letter of Prince Schwarzenberg—General Count Mensdorff—Sir Hamilton Seymour—Arrival of Prince Albert of Saxony—Peterhof—The Emperor Nicholas—The Empress—The Manœuvres at Krásnoje-Selo—Funeral of Wolkonski—Burial of the Duke of Leuchtenberg—Moscow—The Kremlin—Baron Bode's Family Saint—The Last of the Boyars—The Islands—The Point—The Grand Duchess Helena—The Grand Duchess Catherine—The Question of the Holy Places—Private Conversations of the Emperor Nicholas with Sir Hamilton Seymour—Metternich's Criticism thereon—Mental Condition of the Emperor Nicholas—The 'Sick Man'—Mobilisation of the Fourth and Fifth Army Corps—Menschikoff's Secret Mission to Constantinople—Sketches of Society—Karamsin and Puschkin—The Old Muscovite Party and the Germans—Easter Breakfast in the Beloselski Palace—Popularity and Affability of the Czar—Discovery of a Nihilist Conspiracy in 1852—Farewell Visits—Count Nesselrode's Peace Delusions.

On June 4, 1852, the mail steamer from Stettin, the 'Preussische Adler,' cast anchor in Cronstadt harbour. She had had a good passage. In the course of it, some Russian ladies of rank and their husbands had frequently spoken to me of their great Czar with pride, and of Holy Russia with enthusiasm. The impression produced upon my fellow-passengers by the fortifications of Cronstadt was characteristic. The serenity which had hitherto prevailed on board

disappeared. Instead of the joy which usually comes over the homeward-bound traveller, when he sees his native land again, there was a deep gloom on every face. It was as if prisoners, after a brief interval of liberty, were returning to their gaol. Foreign passports were then favours, difficult to be obtained even by persons of the greatest wealth and the highest rank.

I hastened immediately to St. Petersburg, where I was to undertake for a year, as *chargé d'affaires*, the conduct of the Saxon Legation.

The city as seen from the majestic Neva presents an imposing aspect, when the golden domes of the Isaac's Church are glittering brightly through the morning mist. The first impression, however, soon vanishes, for St. Petersburg, at all events in summer, notwithstanding its spacious but desolate squares, and its interminable, broad but empty streets, bears, or then bore, in comparison with Paris and London, the stamp of a provincial town. In that sea of houses, raised by the will of a powerful ruler out of a bottomless morass, it is evident at once that soil and ground, as well as human life, have not yet the same value as in older capitals of natural growth. The chief town of Russia, like the improvised capitals of Australia and America, lacks the consecration bestowed by history, and it is easy to understand that, in spite of all that Peter the Great and Catherine II. did for St. Petersburg, the old Russians should regard Moscow alone as the real metropolis of the Empire.

Twenty-four hours later I had delivered my credentials to the representative of Count Nesselrode, who, like the Emperor himself, was still absent, and I had also paid the necessary visits to the members of the diplomatic body and the various notabilities who were there.

On the day of my arrival I made the acquaintance of a personage who shortly became very prominent. This was Prince Menschikoff, the Minister of Marine and the Czar's Adjutant-General, a tall stately old gentleman of stiff soldier-like deportment and exceedingly courteous. That peculiar sarcastic smile was playing on his lips which usually accompanied his famous *bons mots*. The Prince was one of the few men who enjoyed the full confidence of the Emperor Nicholas, and could say whatever he pleased to his Majesty. Of course this had to be done with caution, and the pill of truth pleasantly sweetened. No one understood this art better than Prince Menschikoff.

Thus he had once to call the Emperor's attention to the embezzlements committed by a general, then in high favour, who was entrusted with the chief management of the Moscow Railway. Menschikoff undertook the thankless task of opening the Emperor's eyes. One Sunday, after parade, the Prince appeared in full dress, decorated with all his orders. On the Czar's asking him where he had been, he replied, 'At the Isaac's Church. A wonderful thing has happened to me there. I stepped into a confessional, to confess to a priest who was a perfect stranger to me. "Absolution," whispered the impudent fellow in my ear, "will be of no good unless you confess *all* your sins to me. You are a great man, and have probably heavier things on your conscience. Reflect, that, even if you escape without punishment before man, God sees every act of dishonesty that you may possibly have committed." I need not picture to your Majesty the indignation with which I repelled this insinuation. The priest shook his head, but gave me absolution, and I partook of the Sacrament. As I was coming out afterwards from the church, my confessor threw himself at my feet and stammered, as he

wrung his hands, "Forgive me, sir! I took you in the darkness for another person. I thought you were General X." '

'What! he too?' exclaimed the Emperor with a smile. An inquiry was instituted, which fully confirmed the priest's suspicions. General X. lost his lucrative post.

So notorious was the corruption in the highest circles of the administration, that one understands the confidence the Emperor Nicholas reposed in the few whose hands were clean. Foremost among such were Menschikoff and Orloff.

St. Petersburg at that time had no railway communication with other countries, and no electric telegraphs. The diplomatic body was therefore cut off from what was going on in the world, and thrown back upon itself. Among all the representatives of foreign Courts, the Prussian Minister, Lieutenant-General von Rochow, was considered the best informed and the most influential. After having reopened the Diet in the previous year, and introduced Herr von Bismarck-Schönhausen as his successor at Frankfort, he had returned to the Russian Court, and was regarded there as a *persona gratissima*. Talkative and good-natured, though without much importance as a statesman, Rochow was a thorough pupil of the old school. He had so imbued himself with the ideas of the Emperor Nicholas that the latter was fond of chatting with him, often imparted to him freely his thoughts, and trusted him more than his own ministers. It frequently happened that when the Emperor confided to the Prussian Minister some important decision in politics, of which Count Nesselrode had no idea, Rochow requested his leave to inform the Chancellor, in the interests of the Government. This extraordinary manner of conducting business is characteristic of the Chancellor's position at the time.

The confidant of the Emperor Alexander I., the friend of

Metternich, the co-signatary of the treaties of Vienna in 1815, the statesman who was considered abroad the soul of Russian policy, was in the eyes of Nicholas I. nothing but a *tschi nowcnik*, an official who enjoyed his confidence only so far as business required. Even in society the Count's charming manners and exalted rank were unable to efface the remembrance that he was the son of a foreigner, and did not belong to the Orthodox Greek Church. Born on board an English man-of-war, and baptised according to the rites of the Anglican Church, Nesselrode had never thought of changing his creed, and paid regularly his devotions in the chapel of the English Embassy. By his subordinates he was much beloved, being affable though strict in office. He attached great importance to a clear and graceful style of composition, and was firmly convinced that all the chanceries envied him the faithful Labenski, his chief *rédacteur*. Nevertheless, he was himself a willing worker with his pen, and spent much time on carefully polishing his despatches.

He never neglected, however, on that account his hothouses on the 'Islands,' especially when the camellias were in bloom. Flowers and music were his passion. He was fond of women's society even in his old age.

One day, just as the camellias were out, the little man with big spectacles was sitting in a sledge, when a messenger arrived. Nesselrode took the despatches in his hand and sent for Labenski. As the latter stepped into the conservatory, the Chancellor had already perused the despatch which gave the first news of the February Revolution in Paris. He stood before a group of bright-red camellias and said to Labenski, pointing to the flowers, 'That is how things are now looking in Paris; the Republic is proclaimed.'

Nesselrode boasted of having drawers in his brain, which he

opened and shut at pleasure; he could thus forget everything else, in order to devote all the energies of his mind to the question immediately before him. This gift of concentration made it easier for him to grapple successfully with the mass of business, both small and great. Real genius can hardly be said to have been his. He produced no ideas of his own, but he knew how to utilise and elucidate the thoughts of others. In sound common-sense Metternich was his superior, as Talleyrand was the superior of Metternich; and yet it is this very quality, no less than his tough, untiring industry, that explains the secret of his long and active official career in the service of three emperors. He knew how to adapt himself adroitly to circumstances, as also to the humours of the Czar. This feature in his character accounts for the contradictions which some have detected here and there in his State papers. He was a different man under Alexander I. to what he was under Nicholas, and again another man under Alexander II. His vast experience helped to bridge over these contradictions. Though by nature essentially a man of peace and law, his pen was always at the monarch's command, whenever he was called upon to demonstrate the necessity of high-handed measures, possibly leading to a war of which he himself disapproved. Real influence he scarcely possessed, at least not under the Emperor Nicholas, before whom he trembled.

Only under a Prime Minister of such a kind was Rochow's position imaginable. He had to thank above all the Empress for it. The daughter of Frederick William III., when on the Russian throne, remained a Prussian princess. The serious *émeute* which the Emperor Nicholas had had to quell on his accession in 1825, had given the Empress's nerves a shock the more violent as she was just then expecting the birth of her second son, the Grand Duke Constantine. This nervous

prostration caused the Emperor constant anxiety, and the recollection of it sufficed to moderate his outbursts of passion and suspend too hasty resolutions when—as had frequently happened since 1848—the attitude of the Prussian Government excited his displeasure.

The homœopathic physician of the Empress, Dr. Mandt, who also prescribed for the Emperor—not always suitably, as his colleagues insisted—served as a mediator between the Prussian Minister and the Emperor.

A man still more in sympathy with the Czar was the recently appointed Austrian Minister and former aide-de-camp of the Emperor Francis Joseph, Count Alexander Mensdorff-Pouilly, F.M.L., who after Rechberg's retirement had been entrusted with the Foreign Office at Vienna. Mensdorff, whose acquaintance the Emperor Nicholas had already made in Austria, had completely won his heart by his frank avowal that he would rather command a cavalry brigade in Kecskemet than play the Minister in St. Petersburg, as he understood nothing whatever of politics. Through his mother, the sister of the reigning Duke of Coburg, King Leopold, and the Duchess of Kent, Mensdorff was related to all the Courts, and being a cousin of the Grand Duchess Constantine, a Duchess of Sachsen-Altenburg, he was treated almost as a member of the Imperial family. Courtesies were heaped upon him, and society vied with the Court in showing all imaginable attentions to the Emperor's new favourite. With the ladies, who fell in love, as it were, by command, with this *beau ténébreux*, he had at the most only one rival, the tenor Mario. Disdaining the petty tricks of the old diplomatic school, Count Mensdorff, by the calm dignity and noble simplicity of his nature, achieved more for Austria than an older man of business could have done.

The most intelligent among the representatives of foreign Courts was unquestionably Sir George Hamilton Seymour, the English Minister. He had for some years held the confidential post of Private Secretary to Lord Castlereagh, afterwards Marquess of Londonderry, and had thus had an opportunity at the Foreign Office of thoroughly studying European affairs. Of good birth—the Marquess of Hertford is the head of the Seymour family—Sir Hamilton had been made Minister after the tragic death of Lord Londonderry, and had represented England in Florence, Brussels, and Lisbon. At Florence he saved Prince Louis Napoleon, at the entreaty of Queen Hortense, from the difficulties in which the later Emperor of the French had been involved through his adventure at Forli. At Lisbon he protected the throne of Queen Maria da Gloria against the insurgents of Oporto, by giving orders, on his own authority, to the English admiral, then lying in the Tagus, to prevent at any cost the rebel fleet under the Marquis de Loulé from effecting a landing. The admiral had fired on the insurgents' ships, and taken the insurgents prisoners. Sir Hamilton sent a message with the news of his self-authorised proceedings to London, offering his resignation in case his conduct were disapproved. Happily Lord Palmerston remained true to his principle never to disavow an agent, and sent Seymour, instead of his dismissal, the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath. It is plain, therefore, that Sir Hamilton was no novice when the Emperor Nicholas, early in 1853, surprised him with those revelations which afterwards did so much to stimulate public opinion in England in favour of the Crimean War. And yet, zealous and active, though cool and business-like, as he was, Seymour was not the man to make an impression on a monarch like the Emperor Nicholas.

The French Minister, General Castelbajac, married to a daughter of the Duc de la Rochefoucauld, belonged to that hybrid class of military diplomatists whose tact in business frequently leaves much to be desired. He was credited with having surprised the Emperor, on the first parade which he attended in his suite, by naïvely inquiring, as they were passing by the palace where Paul I. was murdered, 'N'est-ce pas là, Sire, que votre père à été assassiné?' After the outbreak of the Eastern crisis, this General, who took the 'l'Empire c'est la paix' as Gospel truth, may have done much involuntarily to strengthen the Czar in his illusions about the impossibility of an Anglo-French alliance. Thus he requested an audience, to offer his congratulations on the Russian victory at Sinope, not reflecting that that victory had made a rupture with the Western Powers inevitable.

Even for a more experienced diplomatist, however, the task of a French ambassador would have been extremely difficult, as I gathered from a private conversation, in which General Rochow explained to me the situation.

The General began by opening his heart about Felix Schwarzenberg, who had died a few months before. That the Prussian Minister did not like this statesman, was not surprising. Nevertheless, I was pained to find him persecute his enemy with such bitter hatred beyond the grave. I inquired the cause.

'Good heavens!' exclaimed Rochow, 'that this Schwarzenberg envied us our position in Germany, and did everything he could to wrest it from us, I understand well enough. *De mortuis nil nisi bonum.* But what a man he was! We can only thank God for having freed us from him. I for my part can forgive him everything but one: that he, a Prince Schwarzenberg and a Prime Minister of the Austrian Emperor,

could forget all the traditions of his Court and his own family, to hanker after this adventurer of Strasburg and Boulogne, and trample under foot the principle of legitimacy.'

'Pardon me, General,' I interrupted him, 'there you are really going too far, and appear to be ill-informed.'

'Ill-informed? But, I assure you, I have read the very paper in which this wretched man shortly before his death declared his political creed to Count Nesselrode, and, note well, this was no despatch, such as a very busy minister occasionally signs without having read it; it was a private letter, in his own handwriting, and the only one that Nesselrode ever received from him.'

Now I knew what it was all about, little as I understood Rochow's excitement.

In this letter, which must have been sent in March 1852, the Austrian Prime Minister had begun by expressing his conviction that Louis Napoleon would not allow the year (1852) to pass without assuming the title of Emperor. It would be necessary, therefore, before that event occurred, to come to an understanding about the attitude to be adopted by the three Northern Courts towards the new Emperor of the French.

'Existing treaties,' so Prince Schwarzenberg continued, 'categorically exclude any Bonaparte from the throne of France. By virtue of those treaties, Austria, Russia, and Prussia would be perfectly entitled to refuse to recognise the new Emperor, and declare war against France. If such be the wish of the Emperor Nicholas and the King of Prussia, Austria, always faithful to treaties, will not hold back, and will begin by placing an army of 300,000 men at the disposal of her allies. If the Russian Cabinet, however, hesitates to make Louis Napoleon's acceptance of the Imperial crown a *casus belli*, it is to be hoped that a repetition will be avoided

of the mistake committed in 1830 by the unfriendly recognition of Louis Philippe. From a third restoration of the Bourbons one could scarcely expect any lasting re-establishment of legitimate royalty. To be sure, Henry V. might be conducted back to Paris by the aid of foreign bayonets; but experience shows that his maintenance there can hardly be anticipated. In any event, the heir of Napoleon I. has more chances than the heir of St. Louis of re-establishing the monarchy in that distracted country. If such be his design, he will be obliged in his own interests, like his uncle, to grasp the reins of government with a strong hand, and show a firm front against the Revolution. On this point the interests of the Powers are identical with his own. If he is recognised, under the *sine quâ non* condition of his express submission to the treaties of 1815, and with the positive assurance that the three Powers would consider any attempt at conquest as a case of war, the recognition should be made in a friendly manner, in order to secure his loyal co-operation against the revolutionary party.'

No unprejudiced person can help acknowledging to-day the perfect aptitude of these remarks in Schwarzenberg's private letter. The Crimean War might possibly have been avoided had these counsels been followed in St. Petersburg. The Prussian statesman who succeeded Rochow in Frankfort, and afterwards in St. Petersburg, would scarcely have shared the indignation of his predecessor. At all events, in the 'Autographic Memoir concerning the Relations of Prussia with France,' which Bismarck wrote on June 2, 1857, ideas are unfolded which strikingly agree with the principles thus set forth by Schwarzenberg.[1]

[1] See *Preussen im Bundestage* 1851–1859, published by Poschinger, vol. iv. pp. 274 sqq.

Be that as it may, Rochow's genuine indignation was significant of the anti-Bonapartist feeling then prevailing at the Russian Court. I cannot refrain from recording the General's concluding remarks.

'Thank God,' he exclaimed, 'I have succeeded, though not without difficulty, in bringing back the Emperor Nicholas to a correct appreciation of the question. Little Nesselrode, quite forgetting that he was one of those who signed the treaties of 1815, was himself infected with these corrupt ideas of Schwarzenberg, and had already won over the Emperor. It would have been scarcely possible for me to make the latter change his sentiments if we had not had a statesman again at Vienna. The Emperor Nicholas had never understood Count Buol during his mission to this country, and treated him badly in spite of all my protests. And yet Buol, as I have said, is a statesman, and has shown himself such, having, immediately after taking office, vindicated once more the principle of legitimacy. He proposed to recognise Napoleon, but to refuse him the title of brother. This expedient will let the upstart see that the Emperors of Austria and Russia have no more idea than my own gracious Sovereign of considering him their equal.'

As to the statesmanship of Count Buol opinions were current, both before and after the Crimean War, not altogether in accordance with Rochow's estimate of that Minister. The fate of this expedient, which was hailed with premature enthusiasm, is well known. The Emperor of Austria and the King of Prussia thought better of it, and did not refuse the French Emperor the title of brother, as Buol had at first proposed. Unfortunately, both the Courts of Vienna and Berlin neglected to inform the Russian Cabinet of this change of views, while the Emperor Nicholas remained true to the

agreement, by recognising Napoleon III. but addressing him, like the President of the United States, as 'mon grand ami.' Thus the ill-temper on the part of the French ruler provoked by Buol's proposal fell exclusively on Russia, and was destined not to remain without consequences.

At the Christmas parade in 1852, which Mensdorff and Rochow attended, the Emperor Nicholas gave vent to his anger in the reproaches he heaped, in the presence of the Russian generals, on the representatives of Austria and Prussia, declaring that his allies had deserted and betrayed him in the matter of Napoleon's recognition. General Rochow may have suffered the more acutely throughout this scene, which was extremely painful to all present, inasmuch as he must have remembered that he himself had hindered the adoption of Schwarzenberg's sensible advice, and plainly overrated Buol's tact as a statesman.

These confidential revelations of the Prussian Minister gave me the key to much that seemed strange in the new world I had just entered. How limited after all must be the sphere of authority belonging to the so-called leading minister, when Count Nesselrode, in a matter vitally affecting the interests of Russia, and notwithstanding that he had logic on his side, was forced to yield to the suggestions of a foreign representative!

Thus in this great Empire, as elsewhere, the famous saying of the Swedish Chancellor Oxenstiern was verified. This was the more remarkable, since according to all appearances Nicholas I. had reached at that time the zenith of his power, and imagined in all earnest that the whole of Europe lay at his feet.

After I had made myself in some degree acquainted with the *dramatis personæ*, the drama itself began with the return of the Czar to his capital.

The Emperor Nicholas took up his residence with the Empress at Peterhof, whither soon afterwards the numerous guests repaired who had received invitations to the grand summer manœuvres held yearly at Krásnoje-Selo.

To this military festival the Princes Albert of Saxony and Frederick William of Prussia had also been personally invited by the Emperor Nicholas. The two young Princes were the eldest sons of the heirs presumptive to the throne, and this was their first visit to the Russian Court. Besides them there were present the most distinguished personages of the Austrian and Prussian armies, and soon Peterhof and the surrounding country seats were filled with a multitude of brilliant uniforms. The Emperor himself had received the Princes on board his yacht at Cronstadt, and taken them at first to the Winter Palace. But when Prince Albert after a few days removed to Peterhof, temporary quarters were assigned to me, according to custom, in the castle occupied by his Royal Highness during his visit. Old Rochow was my neighbour, and thus we had frequent opportunities for an intimate interchange of ideas.

On Sunday, July 8 (20), the Czar received me after mass. This was contrary to etiquette, since the Emperor as a rule gave private audiences only to ambassadors and envoys. Prince Albert being there, an exception was made, to which I am indebted for one of the most interesting hours of my life. The master of the ceremonies had conducted me to the room and remained standing at the door, doubtful whether to attend at this unaccustomed audience or not. Without saying a word, the Czar answered the official's mute inquiry by pointing energetically to the door. We remained alone, and I found myself for the first time face to face with the mightiest and most dreaded monarch of the world. In

spite of his fifty-six years, the classical Greek features and giant figure of Nicholas I. still showed the strength of youth. Phidias could have chiselled a Zeus or a god of war from this model. He wore the undress uniform of a regiment of the Guard, a blue double-breasted military tunic. I observed the head, now almost bald, and noticed a low and comparatively narrow forehead, with which the masculine nose formed one and the same line. The occiput, where phrenologists look for strength of will, seemed unusually developed, and the small head appeared to rest on a neck worthy of the Farnese Hercules.

There was something knightly, nay imposing, in the whole aspect of the man, and I now understood how the colossus who stood before me should have been able to quell with a mere movement of his hand the revolution that threatened him at the outbreak of the cholera. Wrapt in his cloak, he had gone alone on that day among the thousands who were shouting loudly in the Isaac's Square, accusing the Government of having poisoned the wells; he had then dropped his cloak and commanded the multitude, with a wave of his hand, to cast themselves upon their knees. Not a man dared to remain standing. Then the Emperor exclaimed with a voice of thunder, 'You wretches! It is not the wells that are poisoned, but you, who have poisoned yourselves with your sins. Now pray God to forgive you, and to take the plague from us.' A 'Hurrah! long live our lord and father!' that sprang at once from a thousand throats, was the answer of the rebellious multitude, and the insurrection was quelled, as by magic, without the help of a single policeman. That great moment was present to my mind as I looked the Emperor in the eyes. They seemed to me somewhat unsettled, those eyes; and a nervous twitching at

the corners of his mouth appeared to betoken pain and uneasiness.

After the Emperor Nicholas had spoken to me with winning amiability about Prince Albert, and the pleasure his visit was giving him, he appeared to forget entirely that he had a young diplomatist before him, whom he had never seen, and about whom he could scarcely have heard anything. Familiarly, as though he were addressing an old acquaintance, he spoke to me of his recently ended journey. He had been to Berlin, to Dresden, to Vienna, he had seen the Empress Maria Anna at Prague, he had stopped also at Weimar and Darmstadt, as well as Stuttgart, where he paid a visit to his daughter. Wherever he went, his eagle eye had seen everything in a few days, and he spoke with an unequalled absence of reserve of what he had noticed on this tour of inspection. The worst he had to say was of Berlin. He grew quite warm when complaining of the weakness of his brother-in-law.

On my endeavouring to quiet these unlooked-for ebullitions with the somewhat commonplace remark that nevertheless the King had the best intentions and the most amiable qualities, the Czar thundered out, 'Tant pis pour ses qualités aimables! Quant à ses bonnes intentions, je vous dis, moi, qu'il ne sait jamais ce qu'il veut. Ce n'est pas un roi cela; il nous gâte le métier. Sachez-le donc'—here he stamped with his foot—'le sol sous mes pieds est miné comme sous les vôtres. Nous sommes tous solidaires. Nous avons tous un ennemi commun—la révolution. Si on continue à la cajoler comme on le fait à Berlin, l'incendie deviendra bientôt général. Ici je ne crains rien pour le moment. Tant que je vivrai on ne bougera pas. Car moi, je suis soldat; Monsieur mon beau-frère ne l'a jamais été.—Tel que vous me voyez,'

he continued in a calmer tone and with all the charm of his well-modulated voice, 'tel que vous me voyez, j'ai trente-huit ans de service, car j'ai fait mes premières armes en 1813. Oui, je suis soldat. C'est mon métier à moi. L'autre métier que la Providence m'a imposé'—these words he spoke very slowly, and almost in a whisper—'je le fais, parce qu'il faut bien le faire et qu'il n'y a personne pour m'en délivrer. Mais ce n'est pas mon métier.'

There was something tragic in this confession. One felt how heavily those cares of government were weighing upon him, which now for seven-and-twenty years, well-nigh a whole generation, he had had to support alone. His keen eye had become quite dulled, and his look had become unsteady. Taking my leave with best wishes from the Emperor, I left the sunny but almost dismal apartment.

Before this audience, I had been introduced to the Empress in the dining-hall, where she was taking luncheon, seated between the two German Princes, and surrounded by upwards of a hundred foreign and Russian generals. The Empress came up to me directly the meal was over. Her beauty had long since faded; but one could trace in the suffering features the likeness to her charming mother, Queen Louisa. Her nerves, of which I had heard so much already during my brief stay at St. Petersburg, were evidently much shaken. The haggard form in light-coloured drapery recalled involuntarily to mind the White Lady who is supposed to haunt the castle at Berlin. Especially painful was the unconscious nodding of the head, which was repeated every second as in a Chinese pagoda.

The first words her Majesty was pleased to address to me were not exactly encouraging, and might easily have caused me some embarrassment in the midst of that numerous com-

pany of strangers. 'Why does the King send us only a *chargé d'affaires*?' was the first question she addressed to me in the most decided ill-temper. I looked at the Empress quietly for a moment, and replied without moving a feature, 'I can assure your Majesty, I would far rather have come as ambassador.' The Empress laughed, and conversed with me most amiably.

My stay at Peterhof was agreeable and very instructive, as I was introduced there, so to speak, at once *in mediâs res*. I found also among the Austrian and Prussian officers a large number of old acquaintances, Count Clam, F.Z.M. Hess, and others, who brought me news from Vienna, for which place I had a genuine feeling of home-sickness.

Among the festivities in honour of the Princes, the most brilliant was the ball, given by the Grand Duchess Maria Nikolajewna, Duchess of Leuchtenberg, in her villa near Peterhof. This lady, then still of wonderful beauty, had inherited the Grecian profile of her father, and was considered his favourite daughter. She was as clever as she was lively. Rather small in stature, but slender and well-proportioned, she was fond of wearing remarkably short skirts, in order, as the world said, to show off her tiny feet. The poor Duke, her husband, was desperately ill, but had, nevertheless, to leave his bed to receive the Emperor. The latter appeared somewhat later than he had been expected, and stepping up to me remarked, pointing to Prince Albert, who was just then dancing with the Grand Duchess: 'Les décrets de la Providence sont inscrutables. Voyez votre jeune prince! Je me connais en hommes. Eh bien, c'est vraiment dommage; il aurait les qualités pour gouverner le plus grand empire du monde, tandis que je connais,' he added with a sigh, 'des héritiers de grands états à qui je ne voudrais pas confier une compagnie.'

The heroic leader of the Saxons in the battle of St. Privat, the victor of Beaumont, the Prince who in the war of 1870–1871 had shown himself, as Moltke said, a real general, did not belie the estimate formed of him by the Emperor Nicholas.

A striking feature of this gathering at Peterhof was the grand review which concluded the manœuvres. The Emperor commanded in person the troops that defiled before the Empress. The march past lasted several hours; it was said—I did not count them—that 100,000 men were there. The Czar halted with drawn sword upon a small hillock, commanding the plain. I had been placed with some ladies close behind the Emperor, opposite the Empress's carriage, and thus obtained the best possible view of this grand military spectacle. I observed that the horses which the Emperor changed several times during the review were all, if not very large, extremely powerfully built. Excellently trained, they scarcely moved an ear, to say nothing of a foot. But not one of those noble animals endured his rider's weight for more than an hour. After that they began to tremble in every limb, and the Emperor was obliged quickly to mount another.

Prince Albert had already on the first day of the manœuvres won the sympathy of the Czar, by his being able to call each of the regiments by its Russian name. The Emperor was also pleased that, on his offering him the choice of uniform for the regiment bestowed upon him, the Prince preferred the simple one of the Chasseurs to the more brilliant one of the Hussars. Nicholas recognised in this choice, as he told me, the genuine soldier.

Shortly after the manœuvres two deaths occurred which closely concerned the Emperor. The old Prince Peter Wolkonski, one of the most trusted officials of the Imperial

Court, succumbed to a long and painful illness. He died indeed a living death. But his influence with the Imperial family remained unabated to the last. The Emperor, the Empress, the Grand Dukes and Grand Duchesses visited him daily; and when one morning the Grand Duchess Marie could not help omitting to embrace him as usual, the dying man grew angry and exclaimed, 'Now, Marie, why don't you kiss me then to-day?' The Grand Duchess complied with his request.

The Emperor had ordered the funeral ceremony to be conducted with the greatest possible pomp. The diplomatic body and all the dignitaries of the Empire were commanded to attend. In the nave of the church had been erected a catafalque on which was laid the open coffin, lighted by thousands of wax tapers. The features of the deceased were hardly visible, as the steps were very high. The clergy in full canonicals celebrated the mass for the dead, and read the customary prayers. When the moment came to close the coffin, the Emperor ascended the steps, kissed the corpse, and then knelt for a long while before the coffin. After that he rose and gave a sign to twelve non-commissioned officers of the regiment which had belonged to the deceased, to carry the coffin to the vault. Just as the procession was about to move, his Majesty pushed the leader aside, himself seized a handle, and bore the corpse of his faithful servant to its resting-place. The ceremony lasted more than half an hour, during which time all eyes were turned upon the Emperor. It was said that Napoleon I. used to consult Talma before every public ceremony, as, for instance, before his coronation, and rehearse with him to some extent his part. No Talma could have taught Nicholas I. the dignity and grace of his movements and attitudes. He was by nature a finished artist, and the greatest actors might have learned from him. All appeared

so simple and so natural, and yet one felt that all was calculated for effect. I thought of Goethe's 'Man fühlt die Absicht . . . ' The Czar's intention was evident, to produce an impression on all who were there, but above all to figure as the humblest and most devout son of the orthodox Church. Hence the full uniform and the stars of various orders sparkling with diamonds. It was the Emperor of All the Russias who was showing the last honour to a faithful servant.

How very different was the behaviour of the same monarch at the funeral of his son-in-law, who died a few days later. The Duke of Leuchtenberg was a Roman Catholic, and his corpse had, therefore, to be buried in a small chapel. As father-in-law he could not or would not be absent, but as the orthodox Czar he could only take part in the strictest *incognito* in the ceremonies of a Church which he did not acknowledge as orthodox. In undress uniform, without any decorations, and leaning listlessly against a pillar, Nicholas remained a vacant and passive spectator of the whole ceremony. He had cared very little for the deceased, and had only consented to the marriage because the Duke promised to reside at St. Petersburg, and not separate the Emperor from his daughter.

The studied indifference which the Emperor showed to the ceremony was aimed not indeed at the deceased, but at the Roman Catholic clergy and worship, which he tolerated only with reluctance. I happened to stand quite close to the Emperor, and could mark distinctly the play of his features. There was nothing to remind me of the orthodox Czar at the funeral service of Wolkonski. But the intention was again apparent. There was a striving for effect in all he did. Here also it was impossible not to admire his talent for acting, which had become a second nature.

After the manœuvres, the Princes, together with the Austrian and Prussian generals who had been invited by the Emperor, made a short trip to Moscow before returning home. Count Mensdorff was unable to accompany them, being ill of typhoid fever. The Emperor treated the invalid with quite a father's care, and went several times to see him. About the middle of September, Mensdorff repaired to Tschugujeff, in order to be present with the Emperor at the grand cavalry manœuvres at that place. This gave him an opportunity of paying his intended visit to Moscow, and he proposed that I should go with him.

My resolution was quickly taken. We stepped into the Imperial saloon carriage which had been got ready for the General, and twenty-four hours later were at Moscow. The journey itself afforded little interest, for the railway does not touch any large town. The Emperor Nicholas had traced this first Russian line of railway with a red pencil on a map, disregarding altogether any considerations of traffic. The engineers never deviated from that line, though it led through innumerable morasses, which did not tend to facilitate the construction. Once only is a distant view caught of the tower of Twer. The stations, in the midst of the steppe, were newly built, and the excellently kept waiting rooms were furnished with sumptuous buffets. Every conceivable kind of refreshment was there, and not a station was without the *champanski* so dear to Russians. So comfortably had we been provided for, that we had not once found it necessary to leave the carriage. Out of curiosity, indeed, we stepped into one of these waiting rooms; but after seeing one, we had seen all, for one is just like another.

A few stations from Moscow the Russian Colonel, Prince Abamelech, announced himself. The Colonel had been

appointed to do the honours to Count Mensdorff during his stay, and conducted him and his aides-de-camp to the Kremlin.

I was taken to an hotel near the palace, and was not a little surprised to receive, a few minutes after my arrival, an invitation to the Emperor's table, a mark of attention for which I was indebted to the Marshal of the Court, Baron von Bode. Prince Abamelech proved himself an efficient cicerone. Court equipages were everywhere in readiness, and so we were able without fatigue to see more of Moscow in three days than other tourists could do in thirty.

In all the public institutions which we visited, the officials received us in undress uniform, and in the famous hospital for foundlings and orphans—one of the grandest charitable institutions in the world—the regiments of wet-nurses were drawn up in their Sunday attire. Each of these regiments is distinguished by a different colour of the *kakoschnik*, and the garment matches the colour of this headdress. These nurses, dressed in green, blue, or red, carried their babies at the breast, and it was said that they suckled them at the word of command. We looked up in the great register in which the foundlings were entered, the year 1812, and found there, during the brief period of the French occupation, a considerable number of little 'Napoleons,' evidently then the favourite name for foundlings.

The Kremlin itself is not merely a castle, but a fortified town. The apartments, since the great conflagration of 1812, have been restored in a sumptuous manner, but with somewhat of an Asiatic taste. The large vaulted hall, in which the earlier Czars held muster of their intended brides among the daughters of the Boyars, is said to have remained unchanged. The Czar appeared in the gallery above, while the young

ladies, each accompanied by her mother or an elder relative, were compelled to lay aside their clothes and reveal all their charms—a barbaric ceremony, which reminds one that Moscow then was still in the very heart of Asia.

Altogether the Asiatic character of the city has not in any way been effaced by the great fire of 1812. But there is a grandeur in the view of the masses of houses at Moscow, the vast extent of which is out of all proportion to its population. Hundreds of golden cupolas, and numerous gardens planted with lofty trees, meet the eye of the spectator, as he looks down from the high ground on the road to Smolensk. This was the point from which Napoleon caught his first sight of Moscow. His army raised a shout of joy, and looked forward to finding in this Eldorado comfort and healing for all past sufferings and fatigue. The picture by Eiwasowski, the famous sea painter, is of course purely fanciful, but it graphically represents that patriotic conflagration, which almost assumed the character of a phenomenon of nature.

Other reminiscences also are not wanting to recall that epoch, so glorious to Russia, of the destruction of the Grand Army. Some of these have their comic side. Thus a collection has been formed of cannons, all of them picked up in the snow and ice, and the astonished Mujik, if he has learned to read, can gather from the tablets that these cannons have been taken from the twenty-two nations who had conspired together against Holy Russia.

Baron Bode, who had married a niece of Countess Julie Stroganoff, insisted on entertaining Mensdorff and myself. So we dined one evening at his house instead of at the Kremlin, and soon observed that our amiable host was among the most pious of mankind. The Greek Church develops a peculiar kind of pietism, and the veneration paid to family saints

recalls the Penates of ancient Rome, or the worship of ancestors in China.

After dinner, Baron Bode handed us cigars; and while the coffee was being served, our host opened, with an air of mystery, the Holy of Holies. This was a small chamber, ornamented like a chapel with various Byzantine paintings; a number of tapers were burning inside, as on a Christmas Eve in Germany, and in the middle, lit up by several heavy silver candelabra, stood an open coffin. In it lay, ornamented with gold leaf and enveloped in an old Russian *kaftan*, a dark-brown mummy. The colour of the face reminded one of the famous black Madonna. It was the family saint. Bode could not part with it. He crossed himself and bowed every time he came near the coffin. But the presence of this corpse among the living was a thing so familiar and of every-day occurrence that it seemed no profanation at all when we lit our cigars by the consecrated tapers.

The next day Abamelech took us to the last of the Boyars, the more than octogenarian and fabulously wealthy Prince Sergius Michaelowitsch Galizin, who lived near Moscow in an almost regal castle, and kept open house, not to say court, every day. He was one of the highest dignitaries in the Empire, and it was said that the Empress Catherine II. had bestowed on him the Grand Cross of the Order of St. Andrew. If this is true, he must have received it in his cradle. At any rate he possessed the highest mark of distinction in the Empire, the so-called Double-portrait, consisting of miniatures of the Emperor and Empress, richly set in diamonds. The Emperor Nicholas never omitted, when he came to Moscow, to visit the old Prince. The latter created almost the impression of an automaton or a wax figure, with his flaxen wig and his false teeth. But he was a hospitable, kindly-disposed old

gentleman, who thawed at once when the conversation turned on the good old days of his youth. He had been at Dresden; the last time at the beginning of 1790. Of what had happened since then in Germany he appeared to know nothing. He inquired eagerly after the Elector of Saxony and his wife, and after a minister whose name was entirely strange to me. The battles of Jena and Leipsic had left no traces on his memory. Yet he spoke of the burning of Moscow as if it had happened yesterday. Kutusoff and Rostopschin were the friends of his youth. He told one of his nephews to show us the farm buildings. We saw stalls full of the finest cows. The old man liked to watch them from his window grazing in the park. I asked about their breed, and learned that they were pure-bred Yorkshires, imported direct on board specially hired vessels. Our guide assured us that his heirs would hardly be able to continue this luxury, as a quart of milk cost his uncle rather more than a quart of champagne. There were plenty of fine horses also, most of them of the famous trotting breed from the Orloff stud. It was, in a word, a model farm in the grandest style and in the middle of the steppe. The muddy and badly kept roads, however, reminded one constantly of Russia. With the death of Prince Sergius the Boyars are now extinct, and soon nothing will remain but the bones of these mammoths of high society.

After having seen Mensdorff on his journey southward under the escort of an Imperial courier, I returned alone to St. Petersburg by train. Some quiet weeks followed; the city being tolerably empty, though in the country houses of the neighbourhood, especially on the Islands, there was daily visiting. In the evening people went to the Point, as it was called, the western extremity of the Islands, whence there was a distant view of the sea. A motley mixture of equipages

was there, a kind of stationary Corso; the men left their one-horse *droschkies*, to go from carriage to carriage, and pay their homage here to a princess, there to some popular actress of the day. The ladies had an opportunity of comparing their Parisian toilettes, and the men of making acquaintances in all circles of the St. Petersburg world. Besides social gossip was heard the latest news of the day, as diplomatists were there in numbers.

What struck me then, and struck me still more when the *salons* opened, was the free-and-easy way in which the measures of the Government were discussed and criticised. The Marquis Posa would hardly have found it necessary to beg for freedom of thought; for not only thought but speech was free enough, if only it was not put into print.

The pleasantest house on the Islands was that of the Grand Duchess Helena, widow of the Grand Duke Michael, the Emperor's youngest brother. She was a Würtemberg Princess, highly cultivated and intellectual, the patroness of several men of art; Rubinstein, for example, is indebted to her for his training and reputation. She was so amiable and so simple that I ventured once to say to her, 'What a pity, your Imperial Highness, that you are a Grand Duchess! How delightful it would be to chat with you, if only one could approach you without any etiquette.' She laughed and said that she had troubled herself very little about etiquette in her life. After having lost several daughters, she was fortunate in being able to keep the youngest one near her, for the Grand Duchess Catherine, who was married to Prince George of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, resided habitually, at least in winter, at St. Petersburg. I knew her husband at Berlin, and found the most cordial welcome at her house.

The winter had come, I mean the White winter, which at

St. Petersburg lasts for eight or nine months, leaving for the Green winter, as the summer is there called—spring and autumn are unknown—only three or four months. And with winter came the storms.

Count Nesselrode had meanwhile returned home, and his daughter, Frau von Seebach, was living with him as mistress of the widower's house.

The jealousies excited by the French Ambassador, M. de Lavalette, between the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholic clergy at Jerusalem culminated in a serious quarrel, and soon the troublesome Eastern problem came once more to the front of European politics. The Emperor Nicholas, who, as Nesselrode remarked, was no diplomatist, thought fit to talk once more about the 'Sick Man.' He sent for Sir Hamilton Seymour, and had the well-known conversations with him, which the latter has faithfully reported.[1]

Lord Aberdeen, the Foreign Secretary in 1844, when Nicholas last visited London, had now—to the Czar's great joy—become, as Prime Minister, the head of what to all appearances was a strong Coalition Ministry. Aberdeen, an old Scotchman, grown grey in State business, had, like most of Sir Robert Peel's adherents, a certain leaning to the Greek Orthodox Church, in which those politicians fancied they detected traces of the primitive Christian and Apostolic community. The Emperor Nicholas took care in 1844 to strengthen and make use of this religious tendency, to pave the way in England for an understanding on the Eastern Question. Nothing positive had been agreed upon; but ideas

[1] See 'Communications respecting Turkey made to her Majesty's Government by the Emperor of Russia, with the Answers returned to them. January to April 1853.' (*Correspondence respecting the Rights and Privileges of the Latin and Greek Churches in Turkey.* London, 1854. Part v.)

were very likely exchanged with reference to certain eventualities, and had awakened in the sometimes optimistic Czar the conviction that Russia could count implicitly on England as soon as Lord Aberdeen came to the helm. Mindful of all that, the Russian monarch now thought the hour had come for a protocol similar to that which the Duke of Wellington had signed in 1826. Before broaching this idea, however, he was anxious to know whether, and under what conditions, England would consent to the expulsion of the Turks from Europe and the partition of the Ottoman Empire. His already highly irritable nature found vent in invectives against the 'Sick Man,' and Sir Hamilton perhaps increased, without wishing to do so, this irritability, instead of calming it down. The latter course, according to Prince Metternich's view, would have been Seymour's proper duty.

I am indebted to Sir Hamilton himself for the report of the following conversation, which he had, when ambassador in Vienna, with the old Chancellor after the death of the Emperor Nicholas and long after the Peace of Paris.

'Do you know, dear Sir Hamilton,' began the Prince, 'that you are a lucky man? I have read with interest your "Secret and Confidential Correspondence," little as I approve of such publications, and my impression is that you have something to thank fortune for.'

Sir Hamilton did not understand what his good luck consisted of.

'Well, then,' continued Prince Metternich, 'you were alone, face to face with the Emperor Nicholas. Suppose the Emperor had disowned his words? What then? As I said, your luck consists in his not having done so, for all Europe would have believed the Emperor, and not you.'

Sir Hamilton was silenced, and could not but admit

that Metternich was right. But the Prince had now pinned him, and did not spare to press his advantage.

'What I wish to add, without hurting you, is, that it was very dangerous and in no way your duty to worm secrets out of the Emperor Nicholas. Don't think you are the first one he has talked to about the "Sick Man." Good heavens! that fixed idea has been worrying him for years. Your duty was either not to let him speak about the matter at all, or, if he did so, to cut him short at once. Would you like to know how I managed to do so when he spoke to me of the "Sick Man"? It was at Münchengrätz at dinner. I was sitting opposite his Majesty. Leaning over the table, the Czar asked me, "Prince Metternich, que pensez-vous du Turc? C'est un homme malade, n'est-ce pas?" I missed hearing the question, and pretended to be deaf, when he addressed it to me again. But on his repeating it a third time, I was forced to answer. I did so indirectly by inquiring in return, "Est-ce au médecin ou à l'héritier que votre Majesté adresse cette question?" The Emperor did not reply, and never spoke to me again about the "Sick Man."'

This clever and eminently statesmanlike criticism leaves one to suppose that Prince Metternich was very well acquainted with the Emperor Nicholas' state of health. Possibly the absurd Crimean War might have been avoided had there been an ambassador then at St. Petersburg who could have combated, with tact and sound, common-sense arguments, the fixed but manifestly half-insane ideas which swayed the unfortunate Czar.

How ill indeed he was, was never found out until after his death. And yet an English physician had discovered, as early as July 1853, symptoms of the hereditary disease from

which the Czar was suffering, and had predicted for certain that the patient had at most only two years to live.[1] This was done in a letter to Lord Palmerston, written with the good object of terminating the complications which were threatening war, and of gaining time until death should have delivered Russia and Europe from a Czar whose mental balance was disturbed. The physician—who proved himself a prophet, since the Emperor Nicholas, as it happened, died suddenly on March 2, 1855, or about four months before the period predicted in the letter—remarks that not one of the four sons of the Emperor Paul reached his sixtieth year, and that all of them, from and after the age of forty-five, suffered severely from congestion of the brain.

Mental maladies, like that of the Emperor Paul, are, as is well known, nearly always hereditary. Alexander I. died at the age of forty-eight in a deep brooding melancholy, which Prince Metternich describes in his sketch of that Prince as a 'weariness of life.' That the Grand Duke Constantine, his brother, though not exactly insane, was so mentally afflicted as to think himself unfit to rule, is an established fact of history. His conduct in 1830, on the outbreak of the revolution at Warsaw, was that of a man wholly irresponsible for his actions. As Emperor he might not, perhaps, have escaped his father's fate. Had he been a private person, he would have been handed over to a mad doctor. As Grand Duke he could be trusted to the care of his wife, the Princess

[1] The confidential letter, dated Kissingen, July 6, 1853, written to Lord Palmerston by Dr. A. B. Granville, the English physician, well known at that time both in Russia and at Kissingen, is to be found in the *Times* of March 5, 1855. The authenticity of this letter, which was circulated in 1853 among the members of the English Cabinet, was vouched for to me, on the day of its publication, by Lord Palmerston himself, who added that the English Government must hold to facts, and could not allow their policy to be determined by the diagnosis of a physician.

of Lowicz. He died, in his fifty-second year, of congestion of the brain. The Grand Duke Michael ended by falling from his horse in a fit; he had passed the fatal age of forty-five by only three years, and had shown, before his death, such a morbid irritability that the author of the letter, who was attending him, did not hesitate to treat him as insane.

The events of 1848–1852 were eminently calculated to aggravate still further such an hereditary disease of the brain. Let anyone merely picture to himself the terrible contrast between the external position and the internal malady of the Emperor Nicholas. Of the latter he, of course, knew nothing. But even had no hereditary disposition existed, the part that Nicholas I. played in 1849 and 1850 would suffice to explain the idiosyncrasies which became patent after 1853. What an impression must have been produced on an irritable nature, inclined already of itself to be overbearing, by the announcement of Prince Paskéwitsch: 'Hungary lies at the feet of your Majesty.' But that was not enough. Did not Austria and Prussia, the very next year, submit themselves to his arbitrement at Olmutz? Was it to be wondered at, after such events, that the Czar should treat the monarchs of such countries not as allies, but almost as vassals? Of Austria he was quite certain, as he boasted to Seymour. Prussia he did not condescend to mention. It was quite a matter of course to his mind that at Berlin his every hint should be obeyed. In his strange infatuation he forgot to take into account 'Monsieur son grand ami,' and the France which, as he fancied, was wholly sunk in the mire of revolution. Nor was he alone in that view. Public opinion, so far as it can be said to exist in Russia, only confirmed him in the belief that the whole of Europe was in a state of revolution, and that princes and people would be compelled to implore the gracious assist-

ance of the White Czar, in order to place their lives and property under the protection of his powerful hand. So universal was this delusion that it was repeated everywhere with the greatest *naïveté*, and no flattery could be more welcome to the White Czar.

Psychologically, therefore, it was perfectly intelligible that Nicholas, in the winter of 1852–53, should have imagined in all earnest that he had only to come to an understanding with England, where his old friend Lord Aberdeen had become Prime Minister, in order to dispose of the Ottoman Empire as he chose. I should doubt whether he really contemplated the taking of Constantinople. What he wished was—just as the boa constrictor first fascinates his victim, and then licks him over for digestion before swallowing him—to spin a web round the Turkish Empire by means of clauses and treaties of every kind, and bring it completely under his power. Perceiving that the offer of Egypt as a bait produced no effect in England, he tried to make Austria the mortal enemy of Turkey.

At Vienna susceptibilities had been awakened by the asylum given by the Sultan to the Pole Bem, and to Kossuth and other Hungarian refugees. Troops were collected, and the Austrian men-of-war took up a position of menace, and one not devoid of danger, owing to the superiority of the Turkish fleet. The frontier dispute between the Turks and Montenegrins gave the Austrian Cabinet a not unwelcome pretext for the mission of Count Leiningen, as to which little was publicly divulged. The General in question went to Constantinople, formulated certain demands, discussed them in concert with the Austrian Internuncio and with the Divan —apparently without success—and finally delivered an ultimatum, with the threat that not only he but the Internuncio

would demand their passports if the Porte did not think better of the matter within twenty-four hours.

It seemed really as if the Sultan would let things proceed to that extremity; and Oseroff, the Russian *chargé d'affaires*, had the impression that a rupture of diplomatic relations between Austria and the Porte was unavoidable. He wrote to that effect, and sent a special messenger to St. Petersburg. As usual, the latter delivered his despatches not at the Foreign Office, but at the Winter Palace. The Emperor unsealed them, read them, and then sent for Nesselrode. The Chancellor, on entering the room, found the Emperor in high spirits. 'Now,' exclaimed his Majesty, 'we have it; the very thing I have always said to you! You can do nothing with these Turkish curs. They have rejected the just demands of the Emperor of Austria. Leiningen has taken his departure, and the Internuncio has demanded his passport. Our turn has now come; the hour of action we have waited for so long. There, read it yourself.' The Minister read with his wonted calmness and with the utmost attention the despatch of Oseroff.

'Well,' exclaimed the impatient monarch, 'have you read it all?'

'I beg pardon, your Majesty, but have you not read the postscript?'

'A postscript?'

'If it please your Majesty. Our *chargé d'affaires* states: "Just as I was on the point of sending off this despatch, news is brought to me that the Porte, at the eleventh hour, has agreed to all the Austrian demands. The Internuncio remains here, and Leiningen leaves Constantinople, his mission having been successful."'

What an impression this news, so unexpected and so destructive of all his hopes, produced upon the Emperor, I was

able myself to gather a few days after. It was on February 23, during a grand entertainment given by the Emperor that year in the Winter Palace. The opera, 'La Figlia del Reggimento,' was being performed in the small Court theatre. Lablache and Mario were acting, and the daughter of Lablache was making her *début* as the heroine of the piece. She had, by the bye, a wonderful voice, which, thanks to her father's instruction, she managed with rare skill, and her beauty excited the admiration of the audience. After the performance came supper; the silver chamber had been emptied, and innumerable tables were laden with costly plate. In the centre a table was reserved for the diplomatic body, where we were placed according to rank. Next to me sat Count Francis Zichy, the only 'foreigner of distinction;' his visit was occasioned by some private business relating to his wife, who had property in Russia. But he was well known, having in the previous year conducted, and concluded to the satisfaction of the Emperor, the negotiations at Warsaw respecting the expenses of the Russian assistance in the Hungarian war.

Nicholas did not partake of the supper, but he made his appearance in the dining hall, and suddenly took his stand behind my neighbour's chair. The latter attempted to rise, but was put back by a pair of strong hands into his seat. On the Emperor's beginning to speak in German, I thought I ought also to rise, in order to remind him that I understood the language. But the Emperor motioned me to remain sitting, and without further noticing my presence, proceeded to give Count Zichy, who was intending to return the next day to Vienna, his last verbal messages to the Emperor Francis Joseph. The Czar spoke during the supper uninterruptedly, and Zichy listened, as did I, in silence. Nicholas soon lapsed spontaneously into French, which he spoke with greater ease,

and now unbosomed himself with that indiscreet frankness which I had already had occasion to observe during my first audience with him. The theme was a castigatory sermon against the Turks, 'ces chiens de Turcs,' as the Emperor repeatedly expressed it. Their rule could not be tolerated any longer in Europe, and he felt confident that the Emperor of Austria, whom he loved as a son, would join with him in clearing out that scurvy rabble on the Bosphorus, and putting an end to the oppression of the poor Christians by those rascally infidels.

This philippic, delivered for the most part in categorical terms and an imperative tone, involuntarily reminded me of Cato's *cæterum censeo*. Had Count Nesselrode heard it, he would have trimmed his spectacles and said, 'My Emperor is no diplomatist.' Of course I kept what I had heard a secret at St. Petersburg, and even afterwards in London.

But I was prepared for everything, and accordingly was not surprised to hear shortly afterwards that the Emperor had suddenly put the fourth and fifth army corps, which were quartered on the Turkish frontier, on a war footing. The news reached me from one of the Empress's ladies of the Court, who is now long dead. This source did not appear to me to be quite pure, and, as young ladies are not exactly competent authorities on military questions, it was possible that there was some mistake. I went therefore to my friend Seymour, to ask him if he also had heard of it. The British Minister, after his confidential interviews with the Emperor, about which, however, he of course never spoke to me, was in a better position than myself to judge of the momentous gravity of this step. He knew nothing of it, and was all the more alarmed. 'It is impossible,' he exclaimed;

'but if it were true, war would be inevitable. I will make inquiries at once, and let you know the result.'

My sledge quickly took me home. After about a couple of hours Sir Hamilton Seymour was announced. He flung himself in a state of the utmost excitement into an arm-chair and said, 'To-morrow I shall send off a special messenger. Thank God, Lord Clarendon is now Foreign Secretary. He has nothing to refuse me; I shall ask for my recall. I can't stay here any longer, the ground is burning under my feet.'

'But, my old friend, for God's sake tell me what has happened. You have often told me that you liked very much to be here.'

'Oh, I have nothing to say against the society. But I am not here to amuse myself, and I cannot discharge my duty successfully unless I have to deal with men on whom I can depend. And men of that sort are not here. I have endured it hitherto, as I was convinced that little Nesselrode at all events was a gentleman. He has shown me to-day that he is not. The news you brought me has been confirmed from the most authentic sources. I hurried off just now to the Chancellor, in order to frustrate if possible, with his assistance, this fatal mobilisation on the Turkish frontier. And he shrugged his shoulders, laughed, and assured me with a cool air bordering on insolence, that the news must have been invented, for he had not heard a word of it. This is too absurd. I cannot have any dealings with this Minister.'

'But,' I broke in to pacify him, 'who says, then, that Nesselrode has not told you the absolute truth?'

'Do you suppose it possible that the First Minister of the Crown should have known nothing of a step on which the peace of the world depends? And he, whom hitherto I have looked upon as the very sheet-anchor of peace?'

'You have lived longer in this country than I, and should therefore better know that the Emperor Nicholas, an autocrat in the fullest sense of the term, often decides on measures without vouchsafing a word to his ministers. Who knows but that this is not the case now? Wait, then, before sending in your resignation, and don't condemn Count Nesselrode before knowing all the particulars.'

A few days afterwards Seymour came again and said to me, 'You were right. Neither Nesselrode nor the Minister of War, Dolgoruki, nor even Orloff himself, had the faintest notion of this mobilisation. The Emperor had received some despatches from Constantinople, he read them by himself in his chamber, rang the bell, sent for his aide-de-camp of the day, gave him a sealed letter and said: "For Tschugujeff! It is urgent!" That was all. Now I remain here, and shall try with the help of little Nesselrode to undo the folly of his great master. But it will be a hard task, for I hear that Menschikoff is to go on a secret mission to Constantinople. And the Chancellor knows nothing even of that.'

One evening, in the Empress's *salon*, shortly after the aide-de-camp's hurried departure to Tschugujeff, the Emperor, apparently in the best of tempers, went up to the Prussian military attaché, Count Münster, for whom he had a great liking, and asked him, 'What news?'

'I know of none. Unless your Majesty has any to tell me?'

'You may as well, then, know it. I have ordered the fourth and fifth army corps to be put on a war footing.'

'You might have left that alone, your Majesty.'

Far from taking umbrage at this candid remark, the Emperor merely exclaimed, 'Why! Orloff told me just the same.'

This mobilisation cost Prince Orloff, nevertheless, an anxious hour. He was, after the death of Wolkonski, the most trusted of his Majesty's advisers. He had rendered his master, after his accession to the throne, one of those services which a man does not so easily forget. The ingratitude often alleged against princes found no place in the noble character of the Czar; and one who like Orloff had saved his life could reckon on his favour so long as life endured. Orloff saved his monarch by a blow of his fist. Accompanied only by this aide-de-camp, the Emperor had stepped in front of a regiment which had mutinied. He hoped that, as had often happened before, his look would suffice to recall the mutineers to obedience. He asked, 'Have you any complaint, my children? Whoever has anything to say to me, step forward!' As a rule, such a question would have remained unanswered, and no one would have stirred. But this time some soldiers stepped out of the ranks. One of them went straight up to the Emperor and levelled his weapon at him. Orloff sprang forward at the same instant, seized the soldier and struck him on the forehead with his fist. The man fell in a heap and was dead. His comrades, pale with terror, went down on their knees and begged his pardon. But the Emperor after that day always kept the young Hercules near him. Rising step by step, Orloff in 1853 was made chief of the Third Section, that is to say, of the secret police of the Empire, which exercised supreme functions over all other officials. His power was greater than even that of a prime minister; all departments trembled before the Third Section, and no *tschinownik* however exalted, no landed proprietor however wealthy and eminent, felt himself safe against this potentate.

And yet the Emperor treated this great man sometimes

like a schoolboy. Probably Nesselrode had spoken to his Majesty about Seymour's inquiry as to the mobilisation of the two army corps, and represented to him at the same time the painful impression which that unexpected step would make in Europe. Vexed at this, he sent for Orloff, and received him in the utmost ill-temper. 'What have I a police for?' he exclaimed.

'Your Majesty must know that best.'

'Quite right, only I don't know what good it is. And if you don't give me in twenty-four hours the name of the traitor who has let out the secret of the mobilisation of the fourth and fifth army corps, you are cashiered.'

'Oh,' replied the Prince quite calmly, 'my police is so excellent that I don't require twenty-four hours to give your Majesty the name of the traitor.'

'You know him, then? You know who it is?'

'I know what I know, your Majesty, but I can only tell it at the Emperor's express command.'

'I give you that command!'

'The traitor whom your Majesty is looking for is Nicholas I., Paulowitsch, Emperor of All the Russias, who always forgets, when he talks about State business, and especially military measures, in the Empress's drawing-room, that each of the ladies of the Court present has not only two ears, but also brothers, cousins, and relations in the army, to whom they tell everything they have heard. And every word dropped by the Emperor spreads like wildfire through the city.'

After this piece of information, Orloff was not cashiered. But in spite of it the Emperor never discontinued his habit, either at the Empress's *soirées* or elsewhere, of talking freely about whatever occupied his mind at the moment.

Peace, however, was striven for more carefully than ever,

and Nesselrode, in particular, played his part with a master's skill. No one was more convinced than he that the conquest of Turkey, if achieved, would be an act of folly which might imperil the very existence of the Russian Empire.

This hasty preparation for war, at the mere whim of an autocrat, is partially explained, moreover, by the fact that the Emperor saw in Turkey's compliance with the demands of Austria a proof of the weakness of the Porte. Menschikoff's mission may therefore be regarded as a Russian counter move to that of Leiningen.

In sea tales and narratives of travel, it is the small black cloud in which the weatherwise captain detects the sign of the coming storm, while the passengers, heedless of danger, are enjoying the blue sky and calm ocean. So also the small black cloud that loomed above the Holy Places in Jerusalem failed to interfere with the amusements of fashionable society during the winter of 1852–1853.

That simple natural tone which made social intercourse at Vienna so like family life, I missed painfully at St. Petersburg, and soon perceived a difference between the Austrian and the Russian aristocracies. Although things were not quite so bad with the latter as in the reign of Paul I., who remarked once with perfect simplicity to a foreign diplomatist, 'En Russie il n'y a de noble que celui à qui je parle et tant que je lui parle,' yet far more stress was still laid on official rank (*tschin*) than on birth. There were, it is true, some old families who prided themselves on their descent from Rurik, and were called on that account Rurik families. Privately, indeed, the members of these families boasted of being more ancient and distinguished than the Romanoffs themselves. Sometimes they even ventured to add that the real Romanoffs had died out, and that the dynasty was now a German one.

The old Muscovite party, which assumed such a tone of arrogance after the Crimean War, was then only in its infancy. But people were beginning even in the drawing-rooms to talk Russian with a certain affectation, and to compare the historian Karamsin with Tacitus, and the poet Puschkin with Goethe. And yet Karamsin's 'History of Russia' was written *in usum Delphini*. Puschkin was a poet, and certainly did much to impart to the melodious speech of his fellow-countrymen the dignity of a written language. But a universal genius like Goethe he was not, and outside his own country he made little mark in the history of culture.

The mania for nationality, however, soon found expression in a hatred of the Germans. It is true that the highest posts in the army and the diplomatic service were filled by Germans,[1] and the numerous sons of the nobility of Courland and Livonia regarded the Russian Empire as an inexhaustible mine of high offices and riches. But the Emperors, in choosing their most trusted servants from these sons of the German Knights of the Order of the Sword, had good reason for their selection. In sound judgment, persevering industry, and especially fidelity and honesty, the Germans were infinitely superior to the Russians.

One of these Courlanders, whom I had known at Dresden, and who occupied one of the highest posts in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, assured me that he had warned the Emperor himself of the arrogance of the Russian party: 'If your Majesty does not check this mischief, we shall live to see in your reign a St. Bartholomew's Night of all German officials.' The Emperor—added my friend—looked very grave, and

[1] A Russian general of German extraction once went through the Army List with me, and proved to me from the officers' names that the percentage of Germans increased at every grade.

promised to have matters mended. The charge made against Nesselrode, of showing partiality to his countrymen, was unjust. For neither Meyendorff in Vienna, nor Brunnow in London, any more than Budberg in Berlin, could easily have been replaced by Russians. The Corsican Pozzo di Borgo had had to represent Russia as Ambassador at Paris for many years, there being no one more capable than he. In the higher circles of society this hatred of Germans was hardly apparent; and of the Imperial Princes, Constantine alone, the second one, was looked on from his youth as a champion of the old Muscovite party. The Emperor was fond of him—his 'Admiral,' as he called him—but treated him strictly.

Among the houses which were open to us foreigners, that of Count Stroganoff was conspicuous for its hospitality. The venerable octogenarian was blind, but had retained the freshness and vigour of his mind. In his youth he had represented Russia at several Courts, and had never broken off his old ties. His second wife, Julie, was a Portuguese by birth, a Countess Oynhausen, the daughter or granddaughter of a Hanoverian who had been naturalised in Portugal. The Countess Julie was about twenty years younger than her blind husband, and of unusually engaging qualities in society. Their handsome residence, enriched with art treasures of every kind, amongst others with a valuable collection of Dresden china, was filled with visitors from morning to night. Every day, according to the old Russian custom, there was open table, where everyone, whether invited or not, found a welcome. The elder son of the first marriage, already a man of sixty, the one-armed General Count Stroganoff, was then Minister of the Interior, and was considered an energetic official. The younger, Gregory, was a colonel and aide-de-camp of the Emperor, and was shortly about to conclude a morganatic marriage

with the Emperor's daughter, the Grand Duchess Marie, the widow of the Duke of Leuchtenberg. The Countess Julie could not be said to be remarkable for her mental qualities, but she had a good heart and was touchingly devoted to her blind husband. A number of young nieces, amongst whom I will only mention the charming Countess Orloff-Denisoff—afterwards married to Count Schouvaloff—gave life to this European *salon*. There was music and occasionally some reading aloud, and everyone came and went as he liked.

Among the Ministers, Count Kisseleff, the former Ambassador in Paris, who presided over the Department of the Imperial Domains, was likewise extremely amiable to us foreigners.

Pratasoff also, the Emperor's general aide-de-camp, who, from his being the President of the Sacred Synod, was nicknamed the Russian Pope, was fond of showing us hospitality, especially in summer at his country, seat near St. Petersburg.

General Count Kouscheleff, and Count Woronzoff-Daschkoff and his agreeable wife, kept, like many others, open house.

A *salon* of a peculiar kind was that of the daughters of the historian Karamsin, the eldest of whom was married to a Prince Mestscherski. She was an invalid, but her younger unmarried sisters did the honours every evening, and, like their brother-in-law, were very pleased when visitors dropped in after a ball. It was not unusual for them to do this as late as four o'clock in the morning. Many a time we did not leave this hospitable house till daylight.

In the Beloselski Palace, one of the finest in St. Petersburg, and since purchased for one of the Grand Dukes, a brother of the reigning Emperor, was then living the Princess Helene Kotschubey, by birth a Countess Benkendorff, who

was mourning for her lately deceased second husband in a boudoir bordered with black. She received visitors in this apartment, but never appeared during this winter in the reception rooms. Her recently married daughter by her first marriage, the Princess Lise Trubetzkoi, a Beloselski by birth, presided over the entertainments at her house. One of these consisted of very tastefully arranged *tableaux*. The other was more original. This was the customary holy Easter breakfast after the long Russian fast. Several of the leading Russian families then maintained, like the Court, private choirs, whose duty it was to sing the hymns during the service in the chapel belonging to the house without any instrumental accompaniment. The singers were all dressed in the livery of the household, and for the most part were well trained. The Russians are born musicians, and thus these choirs could challenge comparison with the famous performances in the Sistine Chapel, only instead of the eunuchs employed at Rome, there were here young serfs. This festival in the Beloselski Palace began, as usual, at ten o'clock in the evening. The chapel was on the ground floor, but the choir and galleries were on the same level as the reception rooms. Thus there was a constant passing to and fro, which lasted throughout the night. The worshippers and the lovers of music went for a quarter of an hour into the chapel, and then returned to the *salons*. The ceremony in the Winter Palace being concluded more quickly, the Court ladies, who came from there in Russian costume, with their *kakoschniks* blazing with diamonds, served to enliven this constant interchange of devotional exercises and profane gossip. When the Hallelujah in the chapel proclaimed that Christ was risen, all who were present, both men and women, embraced each other according to the Russian custom, and hastened to make up for their

long fast at the tables loaded with consecrated viands; a curious spectacle for a foreigner. The Russians seek to testify their orthodox piety by repeating some thousand times on Easter Day, 'Christ is risen!' and emphasising it by the answer, 'Yes, verily, He has risen!' The Emperor himself embraces the grenadiers who stand sentry before the Winter Palace.

How now were things looking beneath the feet of this modern Agamemnon, this king of kings, who at the pinnacle of his power and greatness loved to regard himself as the champion of political order in Europe, and the protector of the other rulers who were threatened by the Revolution? He was proud of being able to pass alone, at all hours of the day and night, without escort or following of any kind, along the streets of his capital. I met him almost daily on his way to his daughter, the Grand Duchess Marie; far off his tall figure could be recognised in an old shabby grey military cloak—the cloak which he had once been obliged to give a droschky driver as a pledge for his fare. Many stories were told to show the popularity and affability of the Russian monarch. His power rested on the masses; he was the supreme head of a people who lived under an almost communistic and decidedly democratic organisation, the *Mir*, and who regarded the Czar as their father, their God on earth. All this sounded very fine, and corresponded with reality about as much as the artificially tropical atmosphere of the palm houses, with which the wealthy Russian ladies adorned their palaces, corresponds with the climate of Nice or Madeira.

A mere accident informed me of what was going on underneath the shining surface, inside the volcano on which people were dancing with such self-complacency.

A trivial matter of business, such as occurs every day

with embassies, led me unexpectedly to surmise the truth. I had made the acquaintance at Dresden some years before, in the house of a Polish lady of rank, of a young Russian, whom, to avoid mentioning his family name, I will call Ivan Ivanovitch. He had an engaging exterior, and the manners of the best society. He had been at some German universities, and surprised me all the more by his very outspoken predilection for the young Hegelians of the Feuerbach type, since I was assured on the best authority that he was one of Count Nesselrode's greatest favourites, and among the most distinguished officials in the Russian Foreign Office. I had not yet had time to look him up at St. Petersburg, when I was officially ordered to remind him of the payment of an outstanding account. I found, on inquiry at his department, that Ivan Ivanovitch had not been at work in the Foreign Office for several months, and no one could or would give me his address. Nothing more was left, therefore, but to request the Russian Government in an official note to settle this trifling affair. I was informed in reply that Ivan Ivanovitch was exiled to Siberia, and politically dead, so that it was quite impossible to obtain either an acknowledgment of the claim by him or payment from his heirs. I tried long but in vain to ascertain something further as to the reason of this exile. At length Prince G——, who was then chief of the secret police, gave me, in the strictest confidence, the following information.

Ivan Ivanovitch had certainly been one of the most favourite officials of Count Nesselrode, and his very extensive capabilities might have afforded him every prospect of a brilliant diplomatic career. Unhappily, however, the young man had allowed himself to be ensnared into a secret society, whose aim was the destruction of all existing institutions.

The police had come upon their track while still in time. On searching the house they found a number of letters, mostly in cipher, the deciphering of which was easy, as the key was there. A few days afterwards Ivan Ivahovitch and his fellow-conspirators were in safe custody. 'I can only tell you this,' so the Prince concluded his statement, 'that the whole affair was contrived with a really fiendish cleverness. The ramifications spread over all our provinces. Here at St. Petersburg the Emperor and all the members of his family, and in the provinces the governors-general and police officials, were to be murdered on one and the same day, and Russia changed into a federal republic. This young man was, as I have said, a genius, and the head of the most dangerous conspiracy that we have detected since the accession of the present Emperor. I have, moreover, every reason to believe that Bakunin, whom you caught three years ago in Saxony, was in the closest alliance with Ivan Ivanovitch. Bakunin is now here, having been delivered up to us by Austria. I have examined him myself. Poor man; I don't think that the Russian army contained an artillery officer in its ranks who was his match in knowledge and ability. Providence has saved us in this affair, and the two delinquents, Ivan Ivanovitch and Bakunin, will expiate their offence in the mines of Siberia.'

Prince G—— was a gentleman and a patriot, who was faithfully devoted to his Emperor and his country, and administered his difficult functions with acknowledged humanity and justice.

The Emperor Nicholas had told me, then, the plain unvarnished truth: 'Le sol était miné sous ses pieds.' Nor had he been wrong in adding that so long as he reigned the party of Revolution would keep quiet. Widely ramifying

conspiracies like that of Ivan Ivanovitch are not repeated every day. Their discovery guarantees peace for a time. How short that time was, we know. And how powerful became the secret societies—the Nihilists, as we call them to-day—is shown by the nefarious assassination of Alexander II.

No one who pictures to himself the impression such a discovery must have made on the Emperor Nicholas, will wonder that he should have been tempted to conjure away domestic danger by means of a diversion abroad. Precisely in the same manner did Napoleon III. in 1870 plunge into a war which cost him his crown and liberty, in the hope of escaping the revolution that threatened him at home. The same motives also which urged on the peace-loving Alexander II. to the unprovoked war against Turkey in 1877 were the result of that unhappy monarch's precarious position at home. And yet neither Napoleon III. nor Alexander II. was mentally afflicted like the Emperor Nicholas, of whose condition his old physician Dr. Arndt had made a diagnosis some years before agreeing with that of his English doctor. As far back as 1840–50 that skilful German physician, who had known his Imperial patient from his youth, lamented the symptoms of hereditary disease in the significant words, 'Il faut que je sois sur mes gardes jour et nuit, car l'Empereur et ses frères ont tous le coup de marteau de l'Empereur Paul.'

Thus my stay at St. Petersburg, though it lasted less than a year, had given me material enough to acquaint myself in some measure with the condition of Russia both at home and in respect of her foreign relations. I hailed not without pleasure the breaking up of the Neva and the moving ice on the Lake Ladoga as signs of the coming spring and the speedy reopening of navigation. I was to leave the Russian capital by the first ship; that was settled.

As the time for my departure drew near, I paid my farewell visits and cleared off current business. The Emperor received me with his accustomed courtesy, but I found him very much altered, gloomy, so to speak, laconic, and absent. The Grand Duke, then heir to the throne and afterwards Alexander II., was more communicative; he was an amiable, good-hearted man, whose weakness of character was revealed in his large but expressionless eyes. The *contour* of his head seemed to me to betoken even less promise than did that of his father's. For natures such as his, a greater misfortune can scarcely happen than to be called to rule a State like Russia.

There was at that time no shorter way to Germany than by sea. During the months when the Neva was free from ice, a steamer went once a week to Stettin. As I was about to go on board, Count Nesselrode sent for me to see him once more before my journey home. He met me in the most friendly manner possible, and seemed in the very best of moods. 'Forgive me,' he said, 'for having given you the trouble of coming; but I was anxious to deliver to you this letter myself, as it is a matter of great importance that it should not come into wrong hands. As a reward for taking it, I will tell you its contents.' I have seen this evening a courier from Constantinople, who brings me the news, so long and anxiously awaited, that the troublesome affair of the Holy Places is at last settled. As peace is, therefore, assured, I have arranged to meet my old friend Schröder (the Russian Ambassador at Dresden) next June at Kissingen.'

I thanked the Chancellor. This was the happiest ending of my mission that I could have wished for.

Scarcely had I reached Swinemünde than I hastened to the telegraph office to send the intelligence of peace to Dresden.

On arriving at Dresden a few days later, after a brief

stay at Berlin, I was met there with the news that my telegram had been forwarded at once to Vienna, but that a reply had been telegraphed from that place that the question of the Key had been settled, it was true, but that peace was in no way assured, as Menschikoff meanwhile was putting forward demands at Constantinople which the Porte would not comply with.

'That only proves,' I remarked, 'that Count Nesselrode was once more not in the secret.'

CHAPTER II.

LONDON.—1853.

Landing—Audience of the Queen—Representatives of the Great Powers—The Marquis d'Azeglio—Dissolution of old Historical Parties—The Coalition Ministry—Signs of a European Crisis—Naval Review at Spithead—Lord Aberdeen's and Lord Clarendon's Love of Peace—The Vienna Note—Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, Protector of the Porte—'We are drifting into War'—Brunnow's View of the Situation—The *Entente cordiale*—Designs of Lord Palmerston and Napoleon—Sinope—Visit to Paris—Anti-English Feeling—Napoleonic Ideas—Count Buol's Difficulties—Neutral Policy of Prussia and the Minor States.

On June 4, 1853, I landed in London at St. Catherine s Docks. By the advice of my friends, I had taken the boat at Antwerp, so as to gain at once on my arrival the imposing view of the shipping on the Thames. Externally, London did not at first sight impress me, accustomed as my eyes had been to the vast dimensions of St. Petersburg. The luxury also displayed in the interior arrangements of the Russian palaces is looked for in vain in the houses of the Londoners. The aristocracy regard the metropolis simply as a place of temporary sojourn. Moreover, one must have first studied for a time the life that throbs in all the veins of this gigantic body, to form a clear conception of the grandeur of the capital of the world. In fact London is not so much a city as a world. But what at the very outset pleased me so uncommonly was the command of a horizon unattainable in any other city in the world; and, next, the feeling of dis-

appearing in the mass of people, a sense of freedom which we do not feel even in Paris, to say nothing of Vienna and Berlin.

From Lord Clarendon, to whom his friend Sir Hamilton Seymour had given me a special letter of introduction, I met with the most cordial reception, and a few days afterwards he presented me to Queen Victoria, to whom, on June 13, I delivered my credentials as Minister Resident from the King of Saxony. Prince Albert was present at the audience.

The same evening I was invited to dine with her Majesty. It was a grand dinner in honour of the newly arrived Duke of Genoa, brother of the King of Sardinia. The Piedmontese evidently saw in the threatening complications in the East an opportunity of realising their scheme of nationality. The Duke, a strikingly handsome man with a military bearing, was extremely pleasant. He had not omitted to bring with him one of the most conspicuous leaders of the Italian party of independence, Chevalier Massimo d'Azeglio, whose acquaintance I then made. This clever and highly cultivated patriot turned to account the short period of his stay by contracting some useful friendships.

The Queen, as also Prince Albert, repeatedly expressed to me that evening their pleasure at seeing again a representative of Saxony at the British Court, the post in London having remained unfilled since the recall of Baron von Beust in 1848.

Like the Queen and her husband, I was then in my thirty-fourth year, and being in the possession of an independent post, could consider my diplomatic apprenticeship concluded. But I had soon to find how much I had still to learn. I knew England only from books, and I soon saw

that neither the party writings of Macaulay, nor the works of Dahlmann, Gneist, and others, could serve me as safe guides in this labyrinth, so little known on the Continent.

Even the diplomatic body, which is more or less lost in this metropolis of the world, was of little help to me at first. In reality, I knew only, and that slightly, the Austrian Ambassador, Count Colloredo, and his wife. The Countess had once lived for some time at Dresden, and had seen me when a child. In remembrance of that, she offered to tell me the official and private history of more than a thousand persons in London society. She was a clever but intriguing woman, and I soon saw that her personal position in the new world I had entered was not a prominent one. Count Colloredo himself, a thorough man of honour, was still too new and unknown to serve as my mentor, notwithstanding the universal respect which he enjoyed.

A most agreeable house was that of the French Ambassador, Count Walewski. His first wife had been an English lady of good family, and thus he had formed intimacies which had already been useful to him in London as the agent of the Polish Committee in Paris, before Napoleon III. came to the throne. He was supposed to be a son of Napoleon I. A novice in diplomacy, this improvised ambassador acquired through extraordinary circumstances an importance to which his talents scarcely entitled him. Only his smooth black hair called to mind the 'Corse aux cheveux plats;' his tall figure and his physiognomy, with the exception of the strongly marked jaw, had nothing Napoleonic. He was extremely vain of his small white hands, in which people detected a legacy of the Emperor. His pleasing manners, suggestive of the Parisian *bon vivant*, did not prevent his being thought in English society somewhat too pom-

pous, and accused of a *parvenu's* want of tact. Thus, for instance, shortly after my arrival, he had said to the Duchess of Sutherland, the Queen's Mistress of the Robes, only a few days before a dinner to which her Grace had invited him in honour of the Duke of Genoa, that as the brother of the King of Sardinia was not a Crown Prince, he could not, as Ambassador, yield precedence to him. The Duchess hastened to the Queen, who at once put an end to the difficulty by announcing her intention of appearing at Stafford House. Her Majesty came and took the Duke of Genoa's arm, Prince Albert took in the lady of the house to dinner, and Walewski had the disappointment but not the laughers on his side.

Walewski's second wife, a Poniatowska from Florence, had inherited the easy-going disposition of her Italian mother and the Slavonic gracefulness of her father. Without being beautiful, she was decidedly pretty and coquettish. There was nothing but the visible jealousy of her husband to provoke a whisper against her virtue. But she was universally liked, and their *soirées* were regularly attended by the leading men of all parties.

The French Embassy was still in Grosvenor Square; the present residence in Albert Gate, Hyde Park, was first purchased by the Government in 1854.

I soon became on terms of intimacy with Walewski, and, as he liked to hear himself talk, I was indebted to him for much information which remained hidden from the newspapers. The secret working of the Government machine in England was, of course, more or less an enigma to the superficial Frenchman. And if Lord Palmerston, as will be seen presently, had not wanted him, he would scarcely have played the part he did. The 'Morning Post' was Walewski's organ,

a paper which in the highest circles of society was then read only for fashionable news, and which exercised a very second-rate influence on public opinion.

Besides the French, there was then only one other ambassador, the Turkish, who until 1885 was the *doyen* of the diplomatic body in London—Musurus Pasha, an Armenian by birth. For the Porte, it was a matter not without its value to be represented in London during the Eastern complications by a Christian, who could illustrate in his own person the truth of the assertion that the twelve million Christian subjects of the Sultan preferred the 'Turkish yoke' to the Russian protectorate.

Prussia had sent Baron Bunsen as Minister to London, an unfortunate choice, since he was wanting in so many of those qualities which would have been necessary to surmount the difficulties of his position. He had already made a *fiasco* at Rome, having involved his Government in the gravest embarrassment by his recommendation to imprison the Archbishop of Cologne. Bunsen had imagined in all seriousness that he would overawe the Vatican by this high-handed measure, and was much astonished when the Pope and the Cardinal Secretary of State gave him to understand that they would no longer receive him. After this failure, Bunsen took care to flatter the fancies of his royal patron, Frederick William IV., who had meanwhile come to the throne, and to make Jerusalem a stepping-stone to London. In fact, it was to realise the pet idea of the King—the establishment of a Protestant bishopric at Jerusalem—that Bunsen was first sent to England. He understood how to make some influential personages share the exaggerated opinion that he had of himself. Among these, in addition to his own king, was, at all events at first, Prince Albert, who took an interest in archæological

studies. Baron Bunsen's artistic dilettantism was a harmless hobby, but that he should have seriously thought himself a statesman was a misfortune for Prussia. The shallow Liberalism which was the rage among the Prussian bureaucracy after 1840, did no good to either Germany or Prussia. However, Bunsen shared that weakness with so many, that no one would have blamed him for it had he entertained it as an honest conviction. That was impossible, if only for the reason that he was never very particular about the truth. I had been warned against him in many quarters after my arrival, and listened patiently, therefore, without attaching any value to his declamations, in which he spared nobody. His defects of manner were as a rule overlooked, thanks to that supreme indifference with which the insular Englishman is wont to look down on foreigners.

The most gifted among the representatives of the Great Powers in 1853 was unquestionably the Russian Minister, Baron Brunnow. He had first attracted the attention of the Emperor Nicholas in the campaign of 1828. He was a big, powerful man, with a remarkably massive frame. If there is any truth in the saying that every man has his prototype in the animal kingdom, Brünnow might be compared to a hippopotamus; he had an old-world look about him. His enormous mouth showed an array of large false teeth. His eyes also reminded one of the monster of the Nile; like the latter when rising above the water, he used to puff and snort. He was considered a remarkably good *rédacteur*, and attached perhaps greater importance to the form than to the substance of his reports, which were considered models of their kind. If he had to attend a conference, and it was a question of drawing up a protocol or a convention, he tried his utmost to get entrusted with the task of putting it into style,

and his colleagues were glad to pay homage to this weakness. In conversation he affected a cordiality which was wholly foreign to his nature. He belonged to the old school of diplomatists. He flattered on principle, but with such a profuseness of studied refinement that his hearers saw through the intention, and were on their guard. The English smiled at these petty artifices, but allowed themselves to be easily impressed by his experience and knowledge of business.

Among the representatives of second-class States, the most active was the Sardinian Minister, the Marquis d'Azeglio. Under the mask of a collector of curiosities and art trifles, he had had an opportunity, through his intimacy with the ladies of Lord Palmerston's household, of practically furthering the tricky policy of Count Cavour.[1] Intellectually he was inferior to his uncle Massimo, but he was active and well-informed. I saw him almost daily at the Travellers' Club.

The Ministry which I found at the head of affairs was a Coalition one, formed a few months before, and typical of the state of decomposition into which the old English parties had then fallen. The aristocratic Whigs and Tories of the time of the great war against Napoleon had disappeared from the stage. A former Tory, Lord Palmerston, was conspicuous among the leaders of the Whigs, or, as they were then already called, the Liberal party. A former Whig, Lord Derby, was leading the Tories or Conservatives. The latter had lost, through the death of the Duke of Wellington in the previous year, one of their most glorious leaders, and through the reform of the Corn Laws effected by Sir Robert Peel, their general staff.

The full significance of Sir Robert Peel's peaceful revolu-

[1] See on this subject Nicomède Bianchi's *La Politique du Comte de Cavour de 1852 à 1861; Lettres inédites.* Turin, 1885.

tion has scarcely been recognised on the Continent in our time, and yet that reform was a social transformation, fraught with perhaps wider consequences to the world than the French Revolution of 1789. In London only can it be seen what an influence the market price of wheat has on the commerce of the world. When wheat on the London market fell from eighty to thirty shillings the quarter, the aristocratic and agricultural Old England was changed to a democratic and industrial State. Cheap bread and Free Trade were the watchwords with which the English statesmen of the new era secured, extended, and made fruitful their hereditary dominion of the sea. That Sir Robert Peel, the son of a wealth manufacturer, should have inaugurated this policy of world-wide importance, is as intelligible as the fact that many sons of the great landowning nobility should have hesitated to follow him on the road. It was just the most able and experienced of the adherents of the old Tory party who had not been able to make up their minds, after the death of their gifted leader, to retrace their footsteps in a body, and thus the Peelites formed a middle party, who, though numbering scarcely thirty members in the House of Commons, yet for a long time sufficed to turn the scale. Lord Derby had made an honourable attempt, after the resignation of Lord John Russell's Whig Ministry in the beginning of 1852, to rehabilitate the Conservative party for office after the secession of the Peelites. He formed out of 'raw recruits,' as he himself expressed it, a Cabinet containing only one minister besides himself who had previously taken part in the councils of the Crown.

These recruits, who were led in the House of Commons with rare ability by Disraeli—himself a *novus homo*—did their duty well enough, but were unable, nevertheless, to escape a

crushing defeat. The new Parliament, which had been elected at their instance, rejected their Budget by a majority of nineteen. Lord Derby had foreseen this, and all his attempts to induce Lord Palmerston and some of the Peelites to join him were ineffectual. The proud Earl, however, consoled himself personally for this failure. He preferred the thankful part of leader of her Majesty's faithful Opposition to the thankless one of a Prime Minister.

Good advice was scarce, when Lord Derby, towards the end of December 1852, tendered to the Queen at Osborne his resignation. The quarrel between Lord John Russell and Palmerston, which had been so disastrous to the Whig Government in 1851, was not yet healed. To entrust the former with the construction of a new Cabinet seemed rash. The Crown, like the country, was longing for a strong Government, and this could only be obtained by a union of the Peelites with the Liberals. Overtures in this direction had already been made, and the Queen, by arrangement with the Whig leader, the Marquis of Lansdowne, sent for Lord Aberdeen. This veteran statesman, now close upon seventy years old, who as long ago as 1813, 1814, and 1815 had played a prominent part in diplomacy, and since then had twice been Foreign Secretary, undertook, not without some hesitation, the onerous but patriotic duty imposed upon him by the Queen. The formation of his Ministry was a difficult task, although both Peelites and Liberals, united as they were in principle, acknowledged that a coalition was the only possible solution. Macaulay, together with Lord Lansdowne, succeeded in inducing the refractory Lord John Russell to undertake the leadership of the House of Commons under Lord Aberdeen; and Lord Palmerston also was persuaded, though not without difficulty, to join the Cabinet as Home Secretary,

the Queen being unwilling to entrust him again with the Foreign Office. At length, in January 1853, the Cabinet was completed, and the distribution of offices determined for the present. The Whigs complained that Lord Aberdeen had given undue preference to the members of his own party, in offering the Chancellorship of the Exchequer to Mr. Gladstone, the First Lordship of the Admiralty to Sir James Graham, and the then united posts of Colonial Secretary and Secretary for War to the Duke of Newcastle.

It soon became apparent that this strong Government was only too strong, for it contained two if not three members each of whom considered himself more fit to take the helm than the honest but now somewhat enfeebled Lord Aberdeen.

A good choice was that of Lord Clarendon, who, though destitute of first-rate ability, brought with him, in addition to his strongly marked Liberal opinions, a great capacity for work, agreeable manners, and a practical knowledge of business. He had been Ambassador in Spain and also Viceroy of Ireland, and was very popular in London society.

The Ministry 'of all the Talents,' as Disraeli called it, was not yet five months old, when Prince Menschikoff's demands at Constantinople brought to the front the Eastern crisis, which was destined to test so severely the ability of English statesmen.

The first serious complication in Europe which had occurred since 1815 found all Cabinets, without exception, unprepared. It is true that the Russo-Turkish campaign of 1828–9, as well as the crisis of 1840 caused by the Quadruple Alliance against France, had already caused the Eastern Question to crop up. But successful efforts had then been made to localise it, and to prevent the outbreak of a war between two or more of the Great Powers of Europe.

Anticipating what actually came to pass, Prince Albert urgently recommended the reform and completion of the much neglected preparations for defence by sea and land. The Duke of Wellington had supported him in this to the end of his life, and Lord Derby also had done what he could during his brief administration to strengthen the manning of the navy.

At the pressing instance of the Prince, a camp had been formed at Chobham in the summer of 1853, thus enabling the concentration for field exercises of the troops belonging to the various garrisons. The Prince himself, as commander of the second division of the Guards, took an active part in these evolutions; and as this first experiment proved successful, it grew into a permanent institution, the still existing camp at Aldershot.

An event of still greater importance was the introduction of steam in the royal navy. Large sums had been spent on this improvement, and the Queen had the satisfaction on August 8, 1853, of holding a grand naval review at Spithead. This review was the great event of the season. The Admiralty had invited to it both Houses of Parliament and the diplomatic body. A special train took us rapidly to Portsmouth, where we went on board a steamer, the 'Black Eagle,' which had been prepared for our reception. The weather was fine, but the sea sufficiently rough to prevent several of my colleagues from enjoying the imposing spectacle. We found sixteen ships of war drawn up in line, and in a short time the Queen, accompanied by the Prince Consort, appeared on board the royal yacht, the 'Victoria and Albert.' Behind them, on another yacht, flying the English flag, came two Russian Grand Duchesses, daughters of the Emperor Nicholas, namely the Crown Princess Olga of Würtemberg and the Grand Duchess Maria Nikolajewna, Duchess of

Leuchtenberg. These two had come, probably not without an object at this critical moment, to visit the Court in London. Hundreds of steamers, filled with thousands of spectators, covered the sea, and the shouts of the people drowned the thunder of the salvoes of artillery. After the Queen had passed up and down through the fleet, the manœuvres began, and it was beautiful to see with what ease, safety, and rapidity such monsters of the deep as the gigantic 'Duke of Wellington,' of 131 guns, were enabled to move by means of the screw. The leading idea was the defence of Portsmouth harbour against an enemy's fleet, whose advance guard, consisting of three English sailing ships of the line, was signalled some miles from the harbour. The steam flotilla was put in motion at a preconcerted signal from the flagship; then, headed by the royal yacht, advanced to meet the three attacking vessels, and, forming line abreast, cannonaded them with the result that they were soon supposed to be crippled and disabled from action. The captain of our steamer had indulged himself by exposing his craft to a broadside from the 'Duke of Wellington.' Seventy-five guns of the heaviest calibre at close quarters caused such a deafening hubbub, and the gunpowder such a blinding darkness, that for some minutes we could literally neither hear nor see. The fight was now over, and the sailors of the defeated ships manned yards and showed the Queen by a thundering hurrah that the battle had not cost any killed and wounded. Now began a thoroughly English chase, every boat having got orders to steam at full speed to the harbour. The practical Englishmen thus converted this spectacle into a valuable technical trial of machinery. As every steamer, even the smallest, took part in this chase, it reminded one of the famous return from the Derby. All went off without an

accident, and the most colossal vessel of the English navy, the 'Duke of Wellington,' came out victorious from the contest.

During my first conversations with Lord Clarendon on the threatening complications in the East, I was able to satisfy myself that, notwithstanding Prince Menschikoff's defiant attitude at Constantinople, the confidence of the English Secretary of State in the loyalty of the Emperor Nicholas remained unshaken. A man likes to believe what he wishes to be the fact; and the English Ministers, at least Lord Aberdeen and Lord Clarendon, wished nothing more sincerely than the maintenance of peace. For Turkey no sympathy was felt, and nothing at first was further from Englishmen's minds than the thought of going to war with Russia on behalf of those infidels and that barbarous and half-rotten empire. Ignorance of Continental relations, and that remarkable indifference which characterises English statesmen, were then palpably conspicuous.

It would be an error to suppose that the confidential correspondence of Sir Hamilton Seymour had already in January and February, that is to say at the time when his private interview with the Emperor Nicholas took place, produced the same impression on the leading English statesmen that it did when presented to Parliament a year afterwards. A purely academical importance had been attached to these overtures of the Emperor; and not having been followed up, they were treated as obsolete. Nay, even when Prince Menschikoff had quitted Constantinople after the refusal of his ultimatum, and the Russian troops, which had been collected with the ostensible object of resisting the encroachments of the Latin monks at Jerusalem, had occupied the Danubian Principalities as a guarantee, strong hopes were still entertained that the crisis might be averted by diplomacy, and that the Emperor Nicholas would give back his guarantee, provided

only the four other Great Powers would combine firmly to make the demand.

Conferences lasting for several weeks led to the Vienna Note, which revealed a mild paraphrase of Menschikoff's demands, but not the slightest hint of an evacuation of the Principalities. Russia hastened to assent to this Note, but the Powers had reckoned without their host, and tacitly assumed the consent of the Porte, a consent which was only given with certain modifications, coupled with a demand for the immediate evacuation of the Principalities.

Under ordinary circumstances, perhaps, the Divan would not have had the courage to amend the Vienna Note; but the English Ambassador at Constantinople, Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, was not the man to let this opportunity slip without taking his revenge upon the Emperor Nicholas, who had refused to receive that passionate diplomatist at St. Petersburg. Imperious beyond all others, highly gifted and energetic, Lord Stratford took the Porte under his protection and made the Divan the obedient instrument of his iron will. Scarcely ever has an ambassador played such a part as did Lord Stratford then. For he was the ruler not only at Constantinople, but also in London.

Great at first was the helplessness of the English Ministers, but it was soon seen that no thought could be entertained of forcing the Porte to accept the Vienna Note. The strong Government were thus forced into a position in which events, and not they, were the masters. Like a ship without rigging, which is drifting into a whirlpool against the will of its steersman, they were being dragged reluctantly into war. Very significantly but not very flatteringly to the British Government, Clarendon in the House of Lords described this position by the words, 'We are drifting into war.'

Old Brunnow, with whom at that time I once talked over the situation in confidence, remarked, 'The worst situations are always those which present no prospect of escape.' On my reminding him of the old line, 'Intra muros peccatur et extra,' he candidly confessed that blunders had very likely been committed at St. Petersburg, as everywhere else, but consoled himself by adding, 'If no one made any blunders, there would be no politics.'

'And no ambassadors and envoys?' I asked.

The old man snuffled and smiled. In fact, it seemed to him a matter of little moment to report to his Government the whole truth as to the position of affairs. He knew that his Emperor, relying on Lord Aberdeen's well-known love of peace, and on the protocol which had been signed by Aberdeen in 1844 under entirely different circumstances, regarded two things as impossible: firstly, that England should declare war against Russia; and secondly, that she should conclude an alliance against Russia with France. These premises of the Emperor's Brunnow thought he was bound to take into account, and his rose-coloured views, which were expressed in his despatches, and had become with him a second nature, induced him to suppress everything that was not in harmony with these presumed axioms of the Czar. Even suppose that so keen an observer as Brunnow had undervalued the element of public opinion in England, and ascribed to the peace speeches of the Quaker Bright and the Free Trader Cobden an importance they did not possess, still he could not have been ignorant of the *entente cordiale*, that sprang up at once at the beginning of the crisis, between England and France.

At the official dinner given by Clarendon in June 1853 in honour of the Queen's coronation day, Walewski as ambassador sat next to the host, and Brunnow next to Walewski.

Both Clarendon and the French Ambassador agreed in assuring me afterwards that they had studiously and purposely spoken in a very loud voice, so that Brunnow might hear all, about the Eastern crisis and the measures which England and France would be compelled to undertake in concert, in case Russia did not desist from her aggressive policy against the Porte. That Brunnow should have interpreted these revelations as empty threats, is scarcely credible. If he wrote about them, he no doubt took care not to touch too closely the idiosyncrasies of his Emperor. It is probable that he knew his monarch too well to imagine that the report of an ambassador would divert him from his resolution once taken.

How little, moreover, Brunnow's advice was asked in these complications, so fateful to Russia, is shown by the remarkable fact that neither the Emperor nor Count Nesselrode thought of summoning this diplomatist to St. Petersburg after he had left London in consequence of the declaration of war. Be that as it may, it certainly appears that Brunnow at that time ignored, or at all events did not report, anything which could at all have displeased his Emperor.

From his intimate relations with Palmerston in 1850, Brunnow must have known that that statesman was using every effort, in his own personal interest, to excite public opinion against Aberdeen and the Court, and to make war inevitable, notwithstanding Aberdeen's and Clarendon's love of peace. His accomplice in that course was Napoleon III. The latter had not forgotten the service Palmerston had rendered him after the *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851. It is well known that Lord Palmerston approved of that *coup d'état*, and recognised it contrary to the wish and will of his colleagues. He suffered for this arbitrary proceeding by the loss of his portfolio. Just as the passionate and ambitious Viscount

could not forgive even Prince Albert for his well-merited rebuke, so Napoleon, on the other hand, could not forget that he owed Palmerston some satisfaction, and that satisfaction, it was obvious, could only be given by the premiership.

Out of these elements was developed a game of intrigue in which the white hand of Walewski showed itself extremely active. Napoleon III. on his accession to the throne had manifestly the choice of basing his system either on the Russian or on the English alliance. Perhaps the first would have been more popular and more advantageous for France, had merely political, not dynastic and personal, interests been considered. The latter, as the heir of Napoleon I. perceived from the very first, could only be served by the English alliance. Louis Napoleon had lived as a private person in England too long not to know that, as his bosom friend Persigny once remarked, there were two Great Powers in the world against which no Government in France can succeed—the London Stock Exchange and the English press. But in the British alliance he looked not only for protection against his enemies at home, but also for the means of acquiring the position in Europe then occupied by the Emperor Nicholas, and on that account alone he could not, at least for the present, ally himself with Russia. 'Nous en avons fait un Empereur,' said Walewski to me at that time, 'nous allons en faire l'arbitre des destinées du monde.'

No one paid more studious homage to these dreams, which were destined, though only for a short time, to be realised, than Lord Palmerston and his friends. Palmerston had far too high an opinion of himself and of his country's power to fear Napoleon's ambition. He knew that dreamer, and resolved to make him useful for his own purposes by seeming to flatter him. When Urquhart, the editor of the

'Portfolio,' in his Russophobia classes Lord Palmerston also among the statesmen who were bribed by the Czar, the accusation is absurd. It would be a mistake, however, to count Palmerston among the blind enemies of Russia. He was now nearly seventy years old, and was anxious to become at length Prime Minister, and during his lifetime, if possible, to have peace in the East. His efforts, of course, did not go to the length of launching on a war of extermination against Russia. He merely hoped, with Napoleon's assistance, to curb Russian ambition for fifty years, as he said, meaning in reality for his own lifetime. For the independence of Turkey he cared nothing, only it seemed to him advisable, especially as there was then no Suez Canal, to have a sentry on the Bosphorus who could guard that passage in the interests of England.

But neither Napoleon nor Lord Stratford de Redcliffe, nor even Lord Palmerston himself, would have succeeded in persuading the English people, lulled as they were by the Manchester school in dreams of perpetual peace, to support this senseless war of the whale against the bear, had not a second untoward event, like that at Navarino, inflamed the passions of the masses. The Russian Cabinet had, even after their occupation of the Danubian Principalities, been lavish in their assurances of peace, and had repeatedly informed Lord Aberdeen in particular that the Emperor Nicholas had no intention of breaking it, or of committing any act of aggression, but only desired the guaranteeing of his rights secured to him by treaties with the Porte.

When, therefore, the telegraph announced the startling news that Russian men-of-war had left Sebastopol, and surprised and destroyed the Turkish fleet anchored at Sinope (November 30), the tidings came like a thunderclap and

aroused the warlike passions of the British nation all the more since naval battles invariably excite the national pride of the modern Venetians. The 'treachery' of Sinope might, therefore, be designated as the turning-point, next to the causes already mentioned, which rendered war inevitable. There was now no more halting; the friends of peace were silenced, and the press repeated in every variety of tone the favourite theme of the danger threatened by Russian barbarism to European civilisation. What the Turks had done or could do for European civilisation, was not indeed evident. But the 'cry' was found and 'worked' *usque ad nauseam*, with the additional charge that Russia had been guilty of a breach of her word.

The *fêtes* on Napoleon's first anniversary of the foundation of the Second Empire served me as a welcome excuse to study for a few days in Paris the situation of affairs. I met there some old friends, among others Baron Philip von Dörnberg, the representative of Electoral Hesse, and Count Adolph Platen, that of Hanover. I found no difficulty, in the midst of the official festivities, in forming an idea of the current feeling of the day. The new Emperor had undeniably the army and the masses on his side; but his English leanings were severely criticised, and even the general public appeared to shudder at the thought of a war with Russia.

In truth very few, and at Paris really none but Morny and Persigny, were in the secret of Napoleon's policy. Nothing was more erroneous than to think that Napoleon had consented to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for England in the East. On the contrary, he outwitted the English, and made them involuntarily subservient to his aims. To understand the origin of the Crimean War, it is not enough to ascribe it to the distempered ambition of the Emperor Nicholas. That

ambition had been studiedly inflamed and artfully fomented. Louis Napoleon or his advisers counted from the first on the Eastern Question, just as the bull fighter counts on the red *capa* when he seeks to infuriate the animal to the highest pitch. In revenge for the Czar's refusal of the title of brother, but above all with the object of preparing the materials for the meditated 'European' Second of December, it was decided at Paris to begin in the East the attack upon existing treaties. It was as *agent provocateur*—so Clarendon afterwards expressed it—that M. de Lavalette had been sent to Constantinople. He laid his mines at the most inflammable spots, and fanned to a bright flame the never slumbering jealousy between the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholic guardians of the Holy Tomb. Scarcely had the explosion followed, when Menschikoff's mission showed that the object was attained. They were able, therefore, at Paris, in order still more effectually to deceive the British friends of peace, to disavow Lavalette, and offer a hand, with a hypocritical show of peacefulness, for terminating the quarrel about the Holy Places. The Second Empire was only a few weeks old, and Lord Clarendon had only been in office a few days, when in February 1853 Walewski verbally concluded with the English Minister the alliance of the Western Powers. It was agreed that France should settle the quarrel about the Holy Places, and that England should observe, till that was done, a benevolent neutrality; after that, the two Powers were to proceed in concert in all other questions which might crop up in the East, continue in alliance for the purposes of negotiation as well as action, and neither speak nor write a word without a previous understanding between themselves. Clarendon perceived in this secret compact the means of holding France in check and compelling the maintenance of peace, while the

French saw in it a means of bringing about a war and dragging England along with them.

Napoleon's object in this was clear; in the first place, to wrest from the Emperor Nicholas the moral hegemony which he wielded on the Continent, and then, after conquering Russia, to get his hands free to tear up the treaties of 1815, restore to France her so-called natural frontiers, and reconstruct the map of Europe in accordance with Napoleonic ideas. That was what they meant in Paris by the 'European' Second of December.

Clarendon was the more easily deceived since the Imperial juggler possessed in Lord Palmerston, as has been already remarked, a *compère* on whom he could rely. The friendship between these two had the fate of such friendships. At first the game went merrily enough. Napoleon and Palmerston did a good business together, though, it is true, at the cost of both countries, who had to sacrifice in vain thousands of brave soldiers and many millions of money. Later on, after Savoy and Nice had been juggled away, but Palmerston had every prospect of remaining Prime Minister till his death, the latter cried off his bargain, showed his teeth, and slammed the door on Persigny, the trusted go-between.

In Germany no one had any suspicion how the game really stood. If Lord Aberdeen, as Prince Albert said in a letter to Stockmar, was not master of the situation, neither were the leading German ministers.

In Vienna, where I spent a few weeks during the recess of Parliament, everything since Prince Schwarzenberg's death had gone backward. The machinery of State was working, so to speak, only at half pressure, since the discontent of the Hungarian half of the Empire had reached a serious pitch. the Minister of the Interior, Dr. Bach, with his system of

centralisation, was more hated than ever, and yet he had already almost superseded Count Buol.

The latter unfortunately often concealed by a haughty and distant demeanour the difficulties in which his ignorance of home and foreign affairs, and his fickleness to his superiors and subordinates, involved him. His antecedents were not very promising. He boasted to me indeed, shortly after his coming to office, of the schooling Prince Schwarzenberg had put him through, having sent him to St. Petersburg and London, and taken him with him to the German conferences at Dresden. Count Buol forgot when so speaking that personally he had not been very successful either in St. Petersburg or in London, and that in Dresden he had only too plainly betrayed to the ministers of the minor States his ignorance of the German Constitution. The Eastern crisis came upon him unprepared, and although he had not neglected to consult Prince Metternich, the latter, nevertheless, could not take from him the manipulation of business, and especially the verbal negotiations with the foreign ambassadors. Besides this, Buol had a small personal grudge against the Emperor Nicholas, who had treated him badly at St. Petersburg, and he was unfortunate, moreover, in having as a brother-in-law the Russian Ambassador, Baron Meyendorff, who was intellectually his superior. The fear of being accused of allowing himself to be influenced by family considerations in favour of Russia, explains much of his conduct at that time. But in the main it is not to be forgotten that the weakness of a State which had barely escaped the dangers of a general revolution, was the real difficulty with which even the most gifted statesman would have had to reckon.

It has often been said that Prince Schwarzenberg would

have checked the Crimean War in the bud by the threat that, if the Russian troops crossed the Pruth, 100,000 Austrians would march at once into the Danubian Principalities. It is possible that a threat of this substantial kind might have delayed, if not prevented, the occupation. But the real question is, would such a delay have given the friends of peace at St. Petersburg time to alter the Emperor's opinions? In any event, the danger to Austria of commencing single-handed a war against Russia would have been a serious one, and have demanded efforts for which neither the army nor the finances were prepared.

The secret, however, of Austria's policy lay also in Germany, and especially at Berlin. The fact could not be disguised that Prussia might very likely take advantage of a Russo-Austrian war to dissolve the scarcely re-established Diet. Under these circumstances, Count Buol fastened, as is usual in such cases, on the expedient of diplomatic negotiations and half-measures, the latter of which, through untimely preparations for war, caused almost as much exhaustion to the Empire as an active campaign. He wished to do justice to all parties, and ended by doing justice to none; neither to Russia and the Western Powers, nor to Prussia and the minor States of Germany. But the worst was, that his cards had been seen, and that the countless enemies of Austria detected the weak side of that Empire. It was clearly a State interest of the first rank to prevent Russia from planting a firm foot on the Danubian Principalities. It was clear also that Austria of all countries could not favour a breach of treaties which might imperil the existence of Turkey to-day, and her own existence to-morrow.

So far as Germany was concerned, she had only an indirect interest in the solution of the Eastern crisis; and

for Prussia, as for the minor States, the maintenance of peace was obviously a matter of necessity. But was everything done which might have been done at Berlin, Dresden, Munich, and Hanover, to maintain the peace? I might say No to this question to-day, just as I said No to it in 1853 and 1854, in opposition to the view entertained by my Government. The voice of the youngest among the then agents of Saxony had, of course, not the weight which was necessary to make his counsel prevail. But by speech and pen I lost no opportunity of combating dangerous illusions. My text was clear. In St. Petersburg and London, I had seen the storm gathering which was destined the next year to burst. I knew that the arrogance of a highly irritable Emperor had been the evident cause of the crisis. I knew also that all true friends in Russia of that Emperor, such as Nesselrode, Orloff, and others, complained of his morbid ambition, though they did not venture openly to thwart it. But at the same time I had gained too deep an insight into the rusty machinery of Government in Russia, to dream for a moment that Russia would issue victorious from a conflict with the two Western Powers. If the support which since 1848 the Emperor Nicholas had given to the German Government against the general deluge of Revolution was not to be undervalued, still the well-recognised interests of those Governments required them to avoid doing anything which might expose the clay feet of the Russian colossus to the gaze of the world and the Revolutionary party. As matters now stood, however, there was only one means of preventing the outbreak of the threatening war. This was, to prove to the Emperor Nicholas by acts, that in persisting in his policy of aggression he was flinging down the gauntlet to the whole of Europe. This alone could preserve unbroken that alliance

of the three Northern Powers which was looked to for preserving the peace of the world and counteracting the Napoleonic lust of conquest. This must, of course, have been done, if at all, before the slumbering religious-national passions of the mighty Russian nation were inflamed. Unfortunately the Russian illusions were quite as strong as the German. Nicholas refused altogether to believe that Austria and Prussia, whom he had treated only in 1850 as vassals, would venture to break with him. But that is the very reason why it would have produced all the greater impression, if not on himself personally, at all events on the peace party in Russia, had the whole of Germany declared from the first her readiness to support, if necessary by force of arms, the legitimate demands of the Western Powers. Had the Czar been firmly convinced that he would find the whole of Europe in compact phalanx on the other bank of the Pruth, he would never have crossed that river in July 1853, but have spared himself and his Empire in the following year the humiliation of evacuating the Principalities 'on strategic grounds.' In a word, there should have been at the outset a common cry of Halt. That was the only means of enabling Austria to discharge her mission in Europe, of strengthening the friends of peace in London as well as at St. Petersburg, and preventing the war so full of danger to Europe.

CHAPTER III.

LONDON.—1854.

Warlike Feeling in the West End—Precarious Position of the Ministry—Accusations and Intrigues—Resolute Conduct of Prince Albert—The English and French Fleets in the Black Sea—Orloff's Mission to Vienna—Autograph Letter of Napoleon—Anglo-French Alliance—Prussia's Refusal to join it—Bunsen's Memorial and Fall—The Situation in Germany—Austro-Prussian Alliance—Seymour's Secret and Confidential Correspondence—Declaration of War—Dinner at the Reform Club—Sir Charles Napier in the Baltic—'Voyage of the Argonauts' to the Crimea—Depreciation of the Enemy—Death of King Frederick Augustus II. of Saxony—The Interview at Boulogne—Battle of the Alma—Rumoured Capture of Sebastopol—Balaclava—English Outpost Service—Inkermann—The Russian Plan of Battle divulged—A Telegram at the Right Time—Menschikoff's Excuse.

On my return to London early in January, after a short stay at Hanover in the midst of snow and ice, I could not disguise from myself the desperate gravity of the situation. The peaceful illusions still cherished in the City were not shared by the West End, where war was deemed inevitable, as inevitable as the speedy break-up of the Coalition Ministry.

Already in December 1853 Lord Palmerston, under the pretext of not being able to assent to Lord John Russell's Reform Bill, had tendered his resignation. In reality his only object in so doing was to protest against the want of energy hitherto displayed, in his opinion, by Lord Aberdeen. It was, to borrow an expression from the French stage, a *fausse sortie*, a manœuvre intended merely to excite public opinion and place on record how indispensable was

Palmerston. Ten days later the indispensable man condescended to resume his post at the Home Office, having employed the interval to commence a campaign against Prince Albert, whom he hated. Nothing was more absurd than these attacks, but the credulity of the public verified again the old saying, 'Calumniare audacter, semper aliquid hæret.' The Prince was accused of meddling without authority in matters of Government, and of intriguing against England with the German Courts. The weaknesses of Lord Aberdeen were imputed to the Queen's husband, and the passions of the masses, who were impatient at the dilatory conduct of the Cabinet, were excited against him individually. Of course Lord Palmerston was far too clever and worldly wise to expose himself openly as the author of these attacks. But that they were, indirectly at least, his work, is notorious. It was actually hinted to the Queen that she would do well to open Parliament alone, as the presence of the Prince might expose her to the insults of the mob. The Prince behaved admirably in this critical position. He refused to be intimidated, and on the morning of the day when Parliament was opened (Jan. 30), rode, accompanied only by a groom, through the most animated quarters of London, as if to say to the masses, 'I am not afraid; here I am, if you have anything against me, speak out.' That morning's ride produced the best impression, and when in the afternoon Prince Albert, seated beside the Queen, drove in the historical State carriage, drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, to Westminster Palace, her Majesty was greeted by the public with the usual enthusiasm. Prince Albert had shown personal courage, and by his sober resolution enlisted public opinion on his side. Nothing more was wanted but to put a right aspect in Parliament on the matter which had given a pretext for these

misrepresentations to the Radical press. Lord Aberdeen in the Upper House, and Lord John Russell in the Commons, discharged this duty with tact and resolution, and the Opposition, by the mouth of Lord Derby and Mr. Walpole, concurred in all the Ministers had said in eulogy of the Prince. The result of these explanations was highly favourable to the Crown, as establishing for the future as well as the present the constitutional right of the Queen to regard her husband as her first adviser.[9]

Meanwhile the combined fleets of England and France, which had been lying for several months in Besika Bay, received orders to proceed at once to the protection of Turkey in the Black Sea, and the French Government hastened to announce this step publicly in a circular despatch of January 30, which was printed in the 'Moniteur.' A fruitless exchange of notes formed the prelude to the rupture of diplomatic relations between the Western Powers and Russia, while at Vienna the representatives of the five Great Powers consulted together as to the terms on which peace could be maintained. Affairs were in this position when the Emperor Nicholas, by the mission of Prince Alexei Orloff to Vienna, and the Emperor Napoleon, almost simultaneously, by an autograph letter to the Czar, made a last attempt at a friendly understanding. It was too late; Orloff's propositions did not appear any longer suitable to the time, and Napoleon's, which were possibly not sincerely meant, remained barren of result. Thus the knot was tied of that alliance between England and France—an alliance really dating from 1853—which was ratified by treaty on April 10. Prince Albert took pride in the reflection that in this alliance, a unique one in history, as he remarked to me, both parties expressly repudiated any selfish designs. This notion was in thorough

keeping with the ideal tendencies of the royal theorist. He overlooked the fact that Napoleon was drawing the sword, if not for territorial, at least for moral conquests. Austria was ready to join the alliance on condition that Prussia did the same. All the efforts of Austria's diplomacy, as of that of the Western Powers, centred on gaining Prussia over. Had that been done, the quadruple alliance of 1854 would perhaps, like that of 1840, have sufficed to check the war in the bud.

Count Thun at Potsdam had already succeeded in quieting so far the doubts of the fickle-minded Frederick William IV. that his accession to the alliance might be regarded as likely, when Baron Bunsen again spoiled everything. He allowed himself to be seduced into enlightening his king in a remarkable Memorial upon the dangers of Prussia's policy of inaction. Bunsen thought that he must put the colours on thickly, in order to intimidate and cajole his royal friend. The question, as he wrote on March 1, was one of no less gravity than the deliverance of civilisation from the yoke of Russian barbarism, and England's real object was to put an end, in conjunction with France, to the despotism of Russia in Europe, and reduce the Czar to an Asiatic potentate, as his predecessors had been before Peter the Great, a Grand Duke of Moscow. This fanciful assertion so frightened the King of Prussia that he now finally resolved to remain neutral, and would have nothing more to do with Powers who thought of treating his brother-in-law so badly.

Bunsen, however, having thus come forth from his shell as such a passionate Russophobist, it was determined not to let him remain any longer in London. Scarce had he learned, to his intense surprise, that his Memorial had produced exactly the opposite impression to that which he had intended, than he tried to pose at any rate as a martyr. He went

accordingly to Lord Clarendon, loaded him with reproaches for the intimidation which, as he pretended, was being attempted by England at Berlin, and ended by being so rude that the Minister showed him the door and declared that he would not have any more dealings with him. This forced scene gave Bunsen the desired materials for his last despatch, in which he plumed himself on having vigorously defended the policy of his King and thereby sacrificed himself. Among English statesmen, as among foreign diplomatists, there was not a single one to whom this farce was not evident, and who would not have been sincerely pleased to see so untrustworthy a personage disappear from the stage of politics. Bunsen's letters of recall were delivered by General von Gröben, who vainly endeavoured to make the British Cabinet understand the policy of his King.

People in England failed altogether to comprehend what was passing on the Continent. Of the rivalry of the two great German Powers they had only dim ideas, and yet therein lay the key to the enigma of Prussia's policy. The more enthusiastic Prince Albert grew for Prussia, seeking, as he did, in Prussian supremacy the solution of the German question, the more he lamented a policy which seemed to him a renunciation, on the part of the Hohenzollern monarchy, of its position as a Great Power. He was no pupil of Machiavelli, and failed to detect the secret designs of a party, already then powerful in Prussia, who, in the hope of isolating Austria in the future, stamped that passive attitude on the Cabinet of Berlin which excited such disgust in London. The minor States also overlooked this danger, preferring as they did, instead of going in their wonted manner with Austria, with the patriotic object of preserving their country from a war on behalf of foreign interests, to

support the Opposition in Prussia against the policy of Vienna. This change of front, the result of the Bamberg Conference, was fraught with double disaster. In the first place it crippled Austria, and made it difficult for her to fulfil her mission in Europe; and, secondly, it offered to the world the spectacle of a disunited Germany and the impotence of the now obsolete Diet. Such a state of things was bound to breed complications, of which Prussia skilfully availed herself to dissolve the Diet and make herself mistress in Germany. The offensive and defensive alliance to which the Berlin Cabinet, pressed on all sides, consented on April 20, 1854, could, in spite of the article added to it in November, be regarded only as a substitute, inasmuch as Prussia never abandoned her neutrality. Austria failed the more completely to obtain thereby a free course of action, since the Bund never took part in it until after months of barren negotiation, and it was then too late to act. Thus, as Hamlet says,

> the native hue of resolution
> Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought;

and Germany remained the spectator of a struggle which she might have prevented, had she only recognised her duty of dictating peace to the world. In Paris, of course, this disunion of Germany was welcomed with a certain malicious pleasure, while in London the irritation reached its climax.

On February 17 Lord John Russell denounced the Russian Government in the House of Commons for its breach of faith. The Russian Chancery, in an officially inspired article in the 'St. Petersburg Journal' of March 2, replied to the charge by referring to secret communications which were not further described. The English Ministry found themselves compelled, therefore, to prove the hollowness of this evasion,

and, contrary to practice, laid the secret and confidential despatches of Sir Hamilton Seymour[1] on the table of the House. This publication brought to light also the memorandum signed at St. Petersburg on April 15, 1853, which summed up the result of the secret interviews by declaring that England and Russia mutually pledged themselves to abstain from coercive measures against the Porte, and to encourage her to introduce the necessary domestic reforms. In glaring contradiction to this agreement stood the categorical demands put forward almost simultaneously at Constantinople by Prince Menschikoff, without the previous knowledge of Count Nesselrode. That was precisely the point which Lord John Russell had sought to insist on in Parliament. The English Cabinet were naturally very pleased to be able to justify the unusual publication of private documents by the insinuations of Russia. The double object was thus attained of more and more inflaming public opinion at home in favour of war, and at the same time of demonstrating to Continental Cabinets the disinterestedness of England. Not only was the French alliance thereby strengthened, but also the Cabinets of Vienna and Berlin were informed of the contemptuous indifference with which the Emperor Nicholas, in his interviews with Sir Hamilton Seymour, had treated Austria, while ignoring Prussia altogether.

The declaration of war against Russia followed on March 27, 1854. The evening before, the Queen had given a small family ball in honour of the Duke of Cambridge's birthday, and I was invited to it. The Queen took an active part in the dances, including a Scotch reel with the Duke of Hamilton and Lord Elgin, both of whom wore the national dress.

[1] See *Correspondence respecting the Rights and Privileges of the Latin and Greek Churches in Turkey*. Part v. London, 1854.

As I had given up waltzing, the Queen danced a quadrille with me, and spoke to me with the most amiable unconstraint of the events of the day, telling me she would be compelled the next morning, to her great regret, to declare war against Russia.

There was now no want of men who thought fit to rouse to a fever heat the warlike passions of the masses. Admiral Sir Charles Napier, who had been entrusted with the command of the fleet which was to effect a summary conquest of Cronstadt, was entertained by the Reform Club at a dinner (March 7), at which Lord Palmerston and Sir James Graham proposed toasts and indulged in such a ridiculous rodomontade that all sober people shook their heads. Bright undertook in the House of Commons to administer a well-deserved rebuke to Lord 'Firebrand' for this provocation of a not yet conquered enemy. Palmerston was much annoyed, but this time had none of the laughter on his side. It is well known that Sir Charles, with all his fine vessels, effected nothing in the Baltic, and contented himself with blockading the Russian fleet in Cronstadt harbour, a result which was not to be undervalued, but which, nevertheless, was out of all proportion to the cost of the enterprise.

That in the Black Sea, also, the fleet alone would not compel Russia to sue for peace, was clear. A land expedition was therefore decided on, and the command of the English contingent entrusted to one of the most distinguished pupils of the Duke of Wellington. Lord Raglan, who had lost an arm in the Spanish campaign, was one of the most amiable representatives of the English army. Of illustrious birth, and trained from his youth in operations of war, he merited universal confidence, and testified by his conduct the excellence of his appointment. France also had found in

Marshal Saint-Arnaud a man who seemed exactly made for such a Quixotic enterprise. For Quixotic in the fullest sense of the word was the beginning of this war. It was a genuine voyage of the Argonauts. Without any settled plan, without knowing what was really aimed at, the troops were thrown first on the unhealthy swamps of the Dobrudscha, where they were decimated by cholera, leaving the Turks to defend Silistria against the Russians, and the Austrians, without declaring war against Russia, to compel the evacuation of the Danubian Principalities. The largest fleet that Europe had seen since the Spanish Armada lay at anchor off Varna. Their performances were confined at first to the clearing of the Black Sea of Russian men-of-war, and the tolerably harmless bombardment of Odessa. After groping about in all sorts of directions, it was thought that the vulnerable point of the Russian giant had been discovered in the Crimea, and the troops were sent thither in the hope of finding Sebastopol unfortified on the land side, and being able to capture it like a fishing village.

While the campaign was being thus commenced with a frivolity excusable only by the novelty of a great war, England gave a brilliant proof of the inexhaustibility of her resources; for the resolution to carry on the war without increasing the National Debt, and to defray the expenses simply by an unappreciable increase of taxation, was not only agreed upon, but at first actually carried out. The revenue from the income tax showed an unprecedented elasticity; complaints indeed were heard here and there about the 'war ninepence,' but they calmed down when it was found that the addition of a penny in the pound represented the receipt of a million pounds sterling.

The war did not interfere in the slightest with the accus-

tomed amusements of the London season. While at St. Petersburg gas-lighting was discontinued for want of English coal, and the hospitable houses of the Russian nobility were closed, balls and festivities were held daily in London, and it seemed to be forgotten that 'far away in Turkey' the brothers and cousins of the fine ladies who were vying in the display of their jewels and Parisian toilettes, were engaged in mortal conflict. No one thought of giving on that account a dinner the less, or parting with a single horse from his stable. Long-continued struggles in India had made people so indifferent to the numerical superiority of the enemy, that it was seriously imagined that 30,000 Englishmen could cope with the legions of the Czar.

Meanwhile the Imperial *parvenu* on the Seine felt the want of a personal *rapprochement* with the English Court. He was anxious to show his French subjects how much he was thought of in England, and accordingly asked Prince Albert if his Royal Highness would be disposed to arrange a meeting with him in the camp between St. Omer and Boulogne, an invitation which the Prince declared his willingness to accept.

I employed the leave of absence which had been granted me in paying first a short visit to Dresden, where I was a witness of the sudden change of Government. King Frederick Augustus II. of Saxony had lost his life by a carriage accident during a trip to the Tyrol, and the news of his death reached Dresden on the evening of the 9th of August. It was a severe blow at this serious time, and the sorrow for the excellent Prince was sincere and universal. His brother and successor, King John, took the reins of government with a firm hand.

After having attended the royal funeral, I quitted Dresden in order to take the sea-bathing ordered by my doctor. I

chose for that purpose Boulogne, where I arrived a few days before Prince Albert.

I kept, of course, the tourist's liberty, and was only a distant observer of the interview. On the very first day after my arrival I met the Emperor Napoleon with his suite. He was in full uniform, with tall riding boots, and with a general's hat on his head, and I can only describe my first impression by saying that this little insignificant man with a huge moustache reminded me of one of those circus masters who, with a long switch in their hands, superintend the performance. But this unfavourable impression disappeared as soon as one came into personal contact with Napoleon III. and experienced his agreeable manners.

What importance this first interview of the French monarch with Prince Albert exercised on the future is well known, and Sir Theodore Martin, in his 'Life of the Prince Consort,' has treated this very chapter with a copiousness that shows what value the English Court also attached to the meeting, which lasted for some days.

While still at Boulogne I read in the newspapers the bulletin of the victory of the Alma, as well as the false report that followed shortly afterwards of the supposed capture of Sebastopol.

From Boulogne I went to Paris, where, likewise as a tourist, I spent a portion of my autumn's leave, and made use of the time to obtain on the spot clear information of the policy of Napoleon III., which I put together in a memorial.

Details of the battles of Balaclava (October 25) and Inkermann (November 5) reached me first in London. At Balaclava, through the misunderstanding of an order, the English had lost the best part of their cavalry. Lord Cardigan with heroic courage had wasted the English horsemen in a

charge against the Russian batteries. He himself with 130 men escaped as by a miracle the hail of grape and canister; and years after that day the London cockney paid an idolatrous homage, as did once the Macedonians to Alexander's Bucephalus, to the Balaclava charger on which the noble Lord was fond of displaying himself in the streets. Nevertheless that famous charge was a tactical blunder, and Lord Cardigan himself was the type of the English officer of the high aristocracy, who in war, as in the hunting field, does not know what danger means, and looks on fighting almost as sport. Very characteristic was the answer which this commander of the British outposts gave to my sympathising question whether he also had personally suffered from the privations of that rigorous winter campaign. 'Oh, no,' replied Lord Cardigan, 'I had sent home for my yacht, and she is very comfortable; only it was tedious having to ride night and morning several miles along the bad roads. But I had my hunters with me, and they stick at nothing.' What would Count Moltke say indeed to such outpost service?

The battle of Inkermann, at all events, was one of the most glorious feats of arms performed by the English army, since, as I was then at least assured, there were only 8,000 English and 6,000 French arrayed against the 60,000 Russians who were to drive the Allies into the sea. The Duke of Cambridge, who commanded the brigade of Guards on that day, told me with great modesty that there was a moment after he had deployed as riflemen the last troops that still remained intact, when it seemed impossible that the thin red line would be able to withstand the onslaught of the Russian masses. And yet the stand was made, thanks to the cool tenacity of the Guards, and to a happily posted battery whose Armstrong guns did splendid service. Thirty years afterwards

a competent witness, Marshal Canrobert, said to me when speaking of that day, 'L'infanterie anglaise est la première du monde.'

In reality the battle of Inkermann was only lost by the talkativeness of the Emperor Nicholas. On paper the plan, according to all who were versed in such matters, had been an excellent one. The Russian general staff had been working it out for weeks under the Emperor's own eyes. The Russian army of the Danube, set free by the Austrian occupation of Moldavia and Wallachia, had been concentrated with all available materials of war under Sebastopol and united with the troops already there. The Allies' position was known well enough. It was known that the English left wing was much exposed—in the air, so to speak—while the French and Piedmontese were too far off to be able to frustrate in time the intended surprise. It could be hoped, therefore, to take the English unawares, to crush them by superior numbers, and then on the following day to attack the French separately, beat them and drive them back upon their fleet. The superiority of numbers once assured, the execution of this attack seemed mere child's play; and so delighted was the Emperor Nicholas at the prospect of undoubted success, that he did not hesitate to confide to Count Münster the plan in all its details. Count Münster only did his duty in immediately reporting to the King of Prussia what the Czar had told him. He fancied that in so doing he had prevented some official indiscretions at home, and could not be aware that it was the very Cabinet of his own Sovereign at Potsdam from which the English and French Embassies were then obtaining the best materials for their despatches. Just as Frederick II. before the Seven Years' War had received copies of the most private documents of the Saxon Cabinet through their

clerk at Dresden, Menzel, whom he had bribed, so Lord Augustus Loftus had a Menzel at Potsdam, who sent him copies, for which an honorarium was duly paid according to the value of their contents. Thus the English Ambassador promptly received the despatch of Count Münster with the Russian plan of the battle of Inkermann. Loftus, perceiving its importance, had the despatch telegraphed in cipher to London, whence, after being deciphered, it was immediately forwarded to Lord Raglan. It was the first direct telegram, so it was then said, that had been sent from London to the commander-in-chief of the British army in the Crimea, and it arrived just at the right moment to enable Lord Raglan to make the necessary dispositions and inform Marshal Canrobert of the danger. The latter immediately ordered up Bosquet's division, while Lord Raglan sent for the Piedmontese. The murderous battle was said to have cost the English in dead and wounded 2,500, the French 1,800, and the Russians 15,000 or 20,000 men; the latter owned to the loss of 11,900, and this was probably pretty near the truth.

When Menschikoff, having been summoned back to St. Petersburg after this disaster, saw the Emperor again, who at first refused to receive him, he was said to have excused himself with the words: 'Que voulez-vous, Sire? Vous avez un ministre de la guerre qui n'a ni senti, ni inventé, ni envoyé la poudre.'

CHAPTER IV.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.—1854.

London, Feb. 6: Count Colloredo's View of the Situation—Protocol of Jan. 13—Baron Brunnow not yet Recalled.—London, Feb. 13: The latest Blue-Books—Hopes and Fears.—London, Feb. 28: Dissolution of the Northern Alliance—Russia and the Party of Revolution.—London, March 30: Memorandum of April 3 (15)—Menschikoff's Demands—Russian Intrigues in London and Paris—Orloff's Mission—Lord Clarendon's Despatch of March 23, 1853.—London, May 22: The Bamberg Conference—Walewski's Criticism—His Remarks on the Origin of the Anglo-French Alliance—London, June 23: Austro-Prussian Answer to the Bamberg Note—Position of the minor States of Germany.—London, July 16: Interview with Prince Albert—His Remarks on the Bamberg Note and the Situation in General.—Boulogne, Sept. 4: Arrival of the Emperor Napoleon—Visits of the Kings of Belgium and Portugal.—Boulogne, Sept. 9: The Meeting at Boulogne—Prince Albert's Arrival and Departure.—Paris, Nov. 17: Memorandum on the Prospects and Programme of the Second Empire.

London: Feb. 6, 1854.

My despatch of yesterday will have completed the account of the thorough change that has occurred here in the state of affairs. I inclose the 'Times,' which is now more than ever the organ of the Government. Friday's article preached downright revolution, and summed up the situation by saying in effect, 'If you gentlemen at Berlin and Vienna do not go with us, we will burn your houses over your head.' My Austrian colleague smiled when I spoke to him with anger about these threats. 'We must forget,' said Count Colloredo, 'our continental ideas when dealing with the English press, and avoid a battle of windmills with them; for the "Times" is

no "Moniteur"—the Government will any day disavow it, and have only a very limited influence on its management. In point of fact the article contained the whole truth. Russia, it declared, had unfortunately set the example, and having failed to arouse the enthusiasm of the nation in favour of the lamely conducted war, had compelled the poor Wallachians to fight against their legitimate Sovereign. That was more than preaching revolution; that was setting an active example of the worst kind. If the Conservative Power *par excellence* behaved thus, what were the Liberals to do? Now, if ever, was the time to rub one's eyes and examine the lying pretexts of Russian policy by the light. The bugbear of Democracy was played out, and would not any longer deceive a soul. Anyone who read the Blue-book impartially could only wonder at the patience of the Western Powers and the incredible blindness of the Russian Cabinet. Spoiled by good fortune, that Cabinet had begun to believe that they had only to express a wish in order to obtain it. But the German Powers were fit for something better than to form a screen behind which Russia might hide her schemes of ambition. The *duperie* of an alliance in which one was to have the winnings and the other two the stripes, could not last any longer; it was bad enough that it had been clung to as long as it had. Orloff must have a totally different *pouvoir discrétionnaire*, otherwise his mission was unintelligible.'

I presume it is known that Orloff left St. Petersburg on the 18th, and Fonton, who arrived at Vienna before him, on the 21st; the protocol of the 13th, however, reached the Russian capital, as we know, on the 20th. Orloff had, therefore, left St. Petersburg before, but Fonton after, the propositions were announced. According to this, Orloff must have found news at Vienna which was nearly three days in advance of what he

had heard on his departure. Had Orloff, then, had simply to deliver the counter-propositions, a messenger would have sufficed. That Russia will and must give way, the representatives here of Austria and Prussia are most firmly convinced. Thus much also seems certain, that Russia would never obtain again a more favourable basis for an understanding than that offered by the protocol of the 13th. If she delayed too long, the four Powers, or possibly France and England alone, would categorically demand its acceptance, and at the same time name a peremptory period, at the expiration of which they would treat the refusal to evacuate at once the Danubian Principalities as a *casus belli*, and proceed to a formal declaration of war. An hour ago no news had yet arrived of Russia's final rejection of the propositions. The telegraphic despatches in the newspapers are consequently premature. Baron Brunnow has not yet left, and seems inclined to wait and see how matters are shaping themselves at Vienna.[1] He may leave, indeed, at any moment, but at all events it would be easier for him here than abroad to resume the threads of negotiation. . . .

London: Feb. 13, 1854.

. . . Comfort you will not find from me, and, I am afraid, nowhere. I might fall back on general phrases, but I think it better to refer you to the two Blue-books which I am sending to-day to Dresden. They contain 788 documents (despatches, notes, and protocols) respecting the rights and privileges of the Latin and Greek Churches in Turkey, and were completed last Friday by the addition of six papers, exchanged between Russia and England, in reference to the suspension of diplomatic relations. Pray get this collection

[1] The recall of the Russian Minister was announced on the same evening by Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, and Brunnow reluctantly left London the following morning (Feb. 7).

from the Ministry, and read these 794 documents calmly and impartially, and, if possible, pencil in hand. We will then discuss them further. Should this tax your patience too severely, I promise you an extract, which Professor Hermann, who is now here collecting materials for his history of Russia, is about to prepare.

I have ascertained thus much from a perusal of these papers, that the Emperor of Austria has acted in the spirit of Schwarzenberg in declining to play the part demanded from him and the whole of Germany. It is not simply a question of choosing between Cossack and Red. The question is, whether Austria, with an army which only a short time ago covered itself with glory at Novara and Temesvár, could allow herself to be treated like Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, or, if you will, like Belgium. The question is: Who broke the peace in 1853? Who preached Revolution? Who forced the subjects of a lawful ruler to take up arms against him? Is the Sultan a less lawful ruler than the Czar? Does the Wallachian owe obedience to the Turk or to Holy Russia? Does the Pope Athanasius deserve hanging less than Mazzini? I am anxious like you, though, perhaps, for different reasons. I am anxious because the man whom we looked on as the protector of order in Europe is only Conservative as long as it pleases him. As to the end of all this, it seems clear enough. Death will have a rich harvest, and this revolutionary nonsense will enjoy its triumph until modern barbarians rule over that petty planet which we name after one of Jupiter's mistresses. When the god of thunder himself, out of love to Europa, changed himself into a bull, why should we wonder that so many mortals are now following his example? 'Something is rotten in the state of Denmark,' and the hour is yet distant when the tragedy will end in peace. I

still hope for peace. You are mistaken if you think that war is wished for here. Not even the officers desire it who are off on the 18th and 19th for Constantinople.

London: Feb. 28, 1854.

An article entitled 'The Conservative Press on the Eastern Question' has explained to me for the first time the misunderstandings to which my letter to you, and other private communications, may have given rise. As to the unseemliness of launching public charges against a crowned head, of course I entirely agree with the writer. The facts on which these charges are founded cannot, certainly, be gainsaid; though it would be unfair, or at least premature, to make the Russian Emperor personally responsible for them. But the most grievous indictment against the Czar is this, that he, the protector hitherto of order in Europe, is now, without either knowing or wishing it, and as if impelled by some terrible fatality, playing into the hands of the Revolutionary party. Austria and Prussia have parted, after a hard struggle, from their old and trusted ally, because their interests imperatively required them to do so. Both have yielded simply to necessity, the Czar being now no longer master of the situation, and having forced matters in the East to a crisis. That there was a point at which, if Russia pursued to extremities her policy of conquest, directed against the continuance of Turkey, Austria would break off from her, was no secret. Indeed, if I recollect rightly, I once pointed out this very eventuality in a despatch from St. Petersburg, superfluous as it was to do so, inasmuch as nobody could doubt that on the day when a Russian army should threaten to cross the Danube for conquest, that 'change of tone towards the North' was bound to take place at Vienna of which Prince Schwarzenberg had spoken immediately after the Hungarian campaign.

As regards the second part of the article, which disputes the proposition 'that Democracy is only a bugbear held up to us by Russia, to enable her to prosecute the more leisurely her schemes of aggrandisement, under cover of the confusion it creates,' you are well aware what my opinions are about the doctrines which are undermining the whole European State system. I need not, therefore, assure you that in this respect I am no admirer of that go-to-sleep policy which would relegate the party of Revolution to the land of dreams. Convinced as I am of the demoniacal might of this sixth Great Power, my anxieties arise mainly from the fear that Russia has apparently fallen, against her will, into the hands of the Revolutionary party. Perhaps you will shake your head incredulously, but I can appeal to the testimony of the Emperor Nicholas himself, who about the time of Menschikoff's mission—therefore about nine months ago—spoke these pregnant words to the representative of a European Great Power at St. Petersburg: ''Ce n'est pas à moi qu'il faut parler de l'ennemi commun; nous lui ferions la partie trop belle, ma foi, si nous allions nous faire la guerre; car le sol sous mes pieds est tout aussi miné que celui de l'Europe entière. J'ai peut-être quelques moyens de repression de plus, mais le danger est le même ici comme partout!' And now? It could not be supposed that I wished to doubt the existence of the social-democratic conspiracy when I wrote to you that Russia had used it as a bugbear, and so on. What I desired to point out was that we in Germany since 1848 have relied far too much on the great Cerberus of the North, and not held together firmly enough against the demagogues, forgetting entirely that the moment might come when we should have to trust to ourselves. We have thus simply earned the contempt of that party who hide themselves behind the 'gigantic

mask of Imperialism,' in order to carry out their Panslavistic schemes—a contempt which is proved by the astonishment expressed that the Governments of Berlin and Vienna should have ventured to reject Count Orloff's propositions. . . .

London: March 30, 1854.

My best thanks for your letter of the 26th, which I hasten to answer in the usual telegraphic style of despatches. The secret correspondence which has just been published, shows that the charge of duplicity brought against the Russian Cabinet was not unwarranted. One hears it often repeated, that no such affront as this has been offered to the Cabinets of Europe since the time of Catherine II., and that the Russian policy of our days can only be compared to that which Machiavelli recommended to his prince. It is clear at any rate from the Memorandum of April $\frac{3}{15}$, 1853, that the Emperor Nicholas had promised the English Cabinet—first, to abstain from any acts that might weaken the Porte; and, secondly, not to do anything at Constantinople without having come to a previous understanding with England. As the *præsentatum* proves, this Memorandum, originating from the private Chancery of the Emperor, came into Clarendon's hands just at the time when he received the first despatch from Constantinople about Menschikoff's menacing attitude. Had the offensive and defensive alliance which Menschikoff categorically demanded been actually extorted from the already terrified Divan, that alliance would at any rate have been more advantageous to Russia than the conquest of Turkey, for the latter would not only have cost money and blood, but have infallibly occasioned a European war. The offensive and defensive alliance, the text of which is printed in the Blue-book, was to have been kept concealed from the

other Powers, especially from the Ambassadors of England and France, and Menschikoff had enjoined the strictest secrecy on the Sultan under threat of the Emperor's displeasure. Thus precisely the opposite was being done in Constantinople to what was being promised in St. Petersburg.

To appreciate this proceeding, it must not be forgotten that the Emperor Nicholas had attempted as early as 1844 to come to an understanding *à deux* with England about the Turkish inheritance. The matter remained in abeyance until Lord Aberdeen, who in 1844 had been Foreign Secretary, became Prime Minister. The hour, it was thought at St. Petersburg, had now come to resume the former negotiations. The secret despatches of Sir Hamilton Seymour leave no doubt on the subject. The Emperor was anxious to settle finally before his death what had become with him a fixed idea. In the energy of his son Alexander he had very little confidence, besides which the attitude of the Austrian Cabinet urged him to take speedy action. That Cabinet had shown by Leiningen's mission how little they were disposed to repeat Prince Metternich's sins of omission. Of course the Czar would have preferred to take possession of the inheritance without a war. England seemed the only Power in Europe who would oppose him. England, therefore, had to be made harmless and bribed. He offered Egypt and Crete, baits which fifty years before John Bull would perhaps have swallowed. But in 1853 England was shrewd enough not to be allured. John Bull said to himself that, in this case as in others, honesty was the best policy, since, in the event of his closing with the bargain, he would be morally bound to permit Russia to take Constantinople, and even to uphold her in possession against the remaining Great Powers. The offer was therefore courteously but firmly declined, and

it was hoped that the Emperor would give up the matter, in order not to wantonly provoke a general war. For, in truth, his original idea was that of a peaceful, not a warlike conquest; and this blissful confidence was maintained till the end of May 1853, that is to say till the recall of Prince Menschikoff, which gave the signal for a close *rapprochement* with France. The silent Bonaparte on the Seine had not eaten for years the bread of exile in England for nothing. He knew how to appreciate the value of the English alliance for the consolidation of his rule, and showed himself frank, straightforward, and practical; in short, a man who inspired the fullest confidence. At St. Petersburg every effort was now made to nip in the bud the supposed impossible alliance of the Western Powers. The game, which had been lost in England, was taken up in France. This time Belgium and the frontiers of the Rhine were to serve as a bait. 'Vous savez,' insinuated Prince Gortschakoff, 'que la ligne du Rhin s'obtient à Saint-Pétersbourg.' But Louis Napoleon was too shrewd not to see that his interests required him to keep firmly to the English alliance; he declined the tempting offer, but did not neglect to give proof in London of his integrity by communicating the documents in question. Now—it was November—came the turn of the German allies, who had been ignored in the conferences with Sir Hamilton Seymour. Baffled in London and Paris, the Czar applied next to Vienna. What did he want? An offensive and defensive alliance, and in return for it he promised a share of the Eastern inheritance. Francis Joseph declined, and Orloff was baffled also at Berlin. Nothing was now left, of course, but war, a wantonly provoked war, the responsibility for which lies mainly on the shoulders of Russia. All this sounds like a fable, but it is a melancholy chapter of history.

Lord Clarendon's despatch of March 23, 1853, which was not originally written for publication, amounted briefly to this: England does not yet regard the 'Sick Man' as dead, and therefore the time has not yet come to talk about the settlement of his inheritance; but even if it had, no two Powers alone could dispose of the inheritance by a separate agreement; such a matter could only be dealt with by a Congress of all the Powers. This correct view only shows that England behaved with more consideration for Germany than did Russia.

To explain Austria's position, I send you Lord Clarendon's despatch of February 18, 1854, containing a summary of Count Buol's despatch on the subject of Orloff's mission to Vienna.

London: May 22, 1854.

. . . People are awaiting here with keen interest the decision of the German minor States and the Confederation, and the Foreign Office is watching with the greatest anxiety everything that may seem to betoken its results. The projected Conference at Bamberg occupies, as will readily be understood, the full attention of the newspapers. The French Ambassador gave me the impression yesterday that he regarded Bavaria as the author of the opposition which the minor States seemed disposed to offer to the invitation to join the offensive and defensive alliance between Austria and Prussia. 'La Bavière voudrait, à ce qu'il paraît,' remarked Count Walewski, 'mettre un prix à son adhésion et demander des garanties pour la Grèce. J'espère que le cabinet de Munich n'en fera rien. M. de Pfordten paraît avoir oublié que ni l'Autriche ni la Prusse n'ont signé les conventions de 1852, et que ces deux puissances renverraient la Bavière, si elle

leur demandait des garanties pour ces conventions, à la France et à la Russie. A Paris on se moquerait de la Bavière pour toute réponse. . . . Le Roi de Wurtemberg aussi paraît avoir des velléités d'opposition ; mais j'aime à croire que tous les Souverains d'Allemagne comprendront que le moment serait très-mal choisi pour contrarier les grandes puissances ; on passerait outre, je vous en réponds.'

On the other hand, I hear that Walewski's anger is chiefly directed against ourselves. 'Cette résistance inconcevable,' he is said to have remarked yesterday, 'est l'œuvre toute personnelle de M. de Beust.' . . .

Calling to mind the Prussian despatch of the 14th, I asked the French Ambassador whether there were any secret or additional articles to the now published treaty between England and France of April 10. Walewski replied most emphatically in the negative. 'Il n'y a ni articles secrets ou additionnels ni conventions spéciales,' he assured me, 'excepté celles que nous avons signées le 10 de ce mois et dont les ratifications ont été échangées hier ; mais ces conventions n'ont aucun intérêt politique ; elles concernent les prises, la juridiction navale, les affaires de détail en un mot. La convention politique est verbale ; c'est moi qui l'ai conclue avec Clarendon en février 1853. L'Empire s'était fait, j'avais été à Paris en Janvier, j'en revins, et je trouvai au Foreign Office Lord John Russell. Peu de jours après que Lord Clarendon eut remplacé ce dernier, entre le 20 et le 28 février de l'année dernière, j'eus avec le nouveau Principal Secrétaire d'Etat une entrevue décisive qui, durant ces dix-huit mois, a formé la base de notre politique. Nous convînmes que la France cèderait sur la question des Lieux Saints, que l'Angleterre dans cette affaire prendrait une position de neutralité bienveillante et médiatrice, et qu'une fois cet incident vidé, les deux puis-

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sances ne feraient pas un pas, n'écriraient ni ne prononceraient une parole dans la question d'Orient sans s'être concertées d'avance. Nous conclûmes notre alliance tant pour la négociation que pour l'action en posant et en envisageant l'éventualité de la guerre. Depuis, nous avons marché de concert. Il y a eu un seul moment où Lord Clarendon nous a témoigné de la mauvaise humeur, lors de l'envoi de la flotte française à Salamine; cette mauvaise humeur n'a duré que vingt-quatre heures, car ce n'était pas sur le fond mais sur la forme qu'il y avait eu divergence d'opinion. Si M. de Brunnow—comme je le sais positivement—a considéré ce moment de mauvaise humeur comme une victoire remportée par lui, il s'est trompé gratuitement, soit par amour-propre, soit qu'il eût manqué de courage pour dire la vérité à son gouvernement. Or, nous n'avons rien fait pour lui cacher nos arrangements; s'il n'en a rien su, c'est qu'il n'a pas voulu le savoir. Car il y a un an, au dîner officiel pour le jour de naissance de la Reine, je me trouvais, comme hier, à côté de Clarendon, et j'avais Brunnow à ma droite; et pendant tout ce dîner nous avons parlé des affaires d'Orient, très haut, de manière à être entendu de lui, comme si nous avions voulu l'initier tout exprès au secret de notre intimité.'

London: June 23, 1854.

If I understand correctly the joint answer of Austria and Prussia, discussed at Tetschen, to the Bamberg Note, our main object, that of securing to the German Confederation, in the present Eastern crisis, a part befitting her dignity and position, appears to be unattained. Nay, between the lines of that answer can be read the suspension, so long as this crisis continues, of our sovereign rights. We must either join the Austro-Prussian alliance of April 20 without further

delay, or not join it at all. In the first event we save appearances and conceal from the world the melancholy spectacle of German disunion, but tacitly concede to the Great Powers the right of holding us in tutelage in the future, as they have done in the immediate past. In the second event we vindicate our freedom of action, but cannot disguise the fact that the German Confederation, as also the Governments which have not joined it, disappears altogether from the stage, and renounces any chance, however remote, of exercising the slightest influence on the question of war or peace. Our independence, nay our political existence, is, therefore, menaced on two sides. On the one side the danger is near us and present, but only temporary, that is to say limited to the duration of the war; on the other, it is remote and future, but also unquestionably conclusive. Against the final decision of a European Congress there is no legal remedy. When the *ultima ratio regum* comes to be discussed, the only effective law is that of the strongest.

No one who observes the political horizon from here, the centre of the European coalition which has been practically existing since last December, can doubt that the moment may arrive when Austria will come to an open rupture with Russia. It may now be said with certainty, that the restoration of the *status quo ante* in Eastern Europe has become impossible. Whatever may be the chances of the war, the torn-up treaties of Adrianople and Kutschuk Kainardji will not be renewed. Russia will either put an end to Turkish rule in Europe, or be compelled, when the war is over, to accept terms of peace, which will change altogether her relations with the Porte. All the European Powers have declared the freedom of the navigation of the Danube to be a common interest. The history of the Sulina treaty between Austria,

Prussia, and Russia shows that, in future, material guarantees for the freedom of the Danube are indispensable. These can only be found in a change in the position of the Principalities. By the Convention concluded on the 14th between Austria and the Porte, the footing of rights previously existing was abandoned. Until then, Russia had the exclusive right of occupying, in certain eventualities, the Principalities, and treating them as protected States. Now Austria has acquired the right of military occupation; and thereby the earlier Russo-Turkish conventions are *de facto* repealed. It will depend on the result of the war, whether the Austrian occupation of the Principalities is to be temporary or permanent. The Western Powers wish far more than fear that Austria should push forward her frontiers to the Pruth, if not to the Dniester. The solid barrier which Austrian bayonets interpose between Russia and Turkey cannot be supplied by any other combination. Little as such an increase of territory would strengthen Austria in Europe, it would, nevertheless, excite the jealousy of Prussia. Nay, I have reason to believe that apprehensions of this kind have delayed the conclusion of the offensive and defensive alliance. Should Austria thus extend her frontiers, Prussia would demand compensation. Saxony and Hanover are in the next place threatened, especially if those States abstain from action until the war is ended. Hanover, whose share in the Bamberg Conference is studiously ignored, might, perhaps, find friends in England. But who would protect Saxony? Certainly not England, and Russia just as little. And yet the 'Kreuz-Zeitung' party have consoled themselves for Gortschakoff's hint to the French Ambassador at Stuttgart that the Rhine was to be won at St. Petersburg, by hoping that the Emperor Nicholas will give his royal brother-in-law compensation in Germany

for the loss of the Rhine provinces. Apart from that, however, Russia would hardly be inclined to make any efforts on behalf of a party who include in their programme the free navigation of the Danube. Our only hope, therefore, rests on the friendliness and neighbourly feeling of Austria. But Austria is only interested in our existence so long as she can count implicitly in all European questions on our moral, and, if necessary, our material support. If, however, we are forced, whether we like it or not, to stand or fall with Austria, resignation, under present circumstances, is preferable to isolation. Therefore, if the question comes to be, how to make the formal act of resignation as fruitful as possible for the future, the simplest thing would be voluntarily to assign the mandate of the German Confederation to the Austrian Emperor during the continuance of the April alliance. By thus conceding to Austria, as the Governments at Bamberg have manifestly the power to do, a temporary dictatorship in the field of high policy, we should strengthen her as against the Western Powers and the vacillations of Prussia, and outwardly, at all events, maintain the dignity of the German Confederation.

M. de Pfordten, in his despatches to M. de Wendland of the 16th, and M. de Cetto of the 19th, has explained the well-known Bavarian memorandum. The fear expressed in these despatches that England will seize the opportunity to occupy the Dardanelles, is wholly imaginary. French jealousy is the best security against this supposed danger. But besides that, Austria is geographically mistress of the Balkan Peninsula, and would be able at any time to prevent the realisation of such schemes, if they appeared. It is not any particular affection for Turkey that has put in motion a single British man-of-war. John Bull is no more enamoured of

Turkish than of Russian 'barbarism.' In fighting, therefore, to maintain the independence of Turkey, the only reason is that there is nothing better, in the first place, to put in her stead. Of the four Great Powers, who alone in this question need be taken into account, three will always be strong enough to prevent the fourth from seizing Constantinople.

The Bavarian Ministers in Paris and London will be expressly instructed to treat the Bamberg Conference, in their communications with France and England, as a domestic and purely German affair. I have also, of course, made it my duty to keep firmly to this position.

London: July 16, 1854.

The private interview which Prince Albert accorded me lasted more than an hour and a half. I take the liberty of summing up briefly the main points of the discussion.

His Royal Highness, I began, would not have failed to notice that Saxony's participation in the Bamberg Conferences had been subjected in England to severe, not to say unfair and unmerited, criticism.[1] Lord Clarendon had thought it his duty, without waiting for the result of those conferences, to embody that criticism in a despatch addressed to the British Minister in Dresden, which both from its form and substance could not but have seemed offensive. The protest provoked

[1] The middle and smaller States of Germany having been invited to join the treaty concluded between Austria and Prussia on April 20, 1854, their Ministers met at Bamberg and prepared a joint note for presentation to the two Great German Powers, indicating the conditions under which the Diet would accede to that treaty. It was the first manifestation of the so-called 'Trias,' the combination of all the middle and smaller States of Germany with Austria and Prussia. Lord Clarendon addressed a reproof to the Saxon Government exclusively, and Baron Beust, in addition to a despatch addressed to Count Vitzthum on July 9, 1854, protested against this interference in a purely domestic German question. This despatch is given in full in Count Beust's *Memoirs*, vol. i. pp. 189-194.

by this interference in a purely German affair was communicated by me two days ago to the Foreign Secretary. I had every reason to suppose that Lord Clarendon, after being acquainted with our reply, had seen at once that he was troubling himself about a matter which did not concern himself at all, and that he would spare us such meddling for the future. The matter was therefore ended, and had only an historical interest, less for the husband of her Britannic Majesty than for the Saxon Prince, whose heart had always beat so warmly for Germany. I begged leave, therefore, to place in his hands confidentially Count Beust's despatch of July 9, and also some further documents relating to this matter, with the request that he would examine them impartially in the quiet of his country seat at Osborne. I drew his particular attention to the fact that the draft of the Bund's resolutions, as well as the despatches sent to Vienna and Berlin, had not been confidentially communicated to the British Government, since we had laid it down as a strict rule to treat the matter as one purely German and domestic. At the same time I expressed the hope that the Prince would be convinced, after reading these papers, that we had never been anything but loyal to the Bund and Germany, while our unconditional accession to the Austro-Prussian alliance of April 20 practically refuted the suspicion of our having been swayed by Russian sympathies.

The Prince thereupon observed as follows: 'In point of law, no objection can be taken to the view adopted at Bamberg. I have expressed my conviction to this effect without reserve, both to Lord Clarendon and Count Colloredo. Article 49 of the Final Act of Vienna is, in my opinion, in flat contradiction to the Convention of April 20. Whether what you have done is politic, is another question. I consider

the danger to poor Germany and all the second-rate German States as one extremely menacing. Their existence depends on the convenience of Europe; in other words, on the jealousy of the Great Powers. For generations European history has shown a constant series of endeavours to prevent the powerful and intelligent nation which occupies the central portion of our continent from attaining its natural political importance. England, surrounded by the sea, and therefore powerful; France, with her strong Pyrenean frontier and extended seaboard; and, especially, Russia, have all an interest in common, to keep poor Germany disunited and weak. Nowhere has this so-called European necessity been proclaimed with such naked effrontery as in a circular despatch of Count Nesselrode in 1851 respecting the Schleswig-Holstein question. All the German Governments who in 1848–1850 prevented Germany from acquiring one army, one fleet, and one diplomacy, have played into the hands of foreign countries. They have broken with the national idea, and sought a prop for the so-called monarchical principle, that is to say for the maintenance of its nominal supremacy in Russia. Thus, from fear of mediatisation and revolution, the German Governments have failed to see facts as they are. The sympathies of the people are with us, England, and France; those of the Courts with Russia. In Berlin as in Dresden, in Munich as in Stuttgart, in Darmstadt as in Schwerin, the Courts wish us defeat, and would hail with delight any triumph of the Russian arms. I find this quite natural, and cannot understand how anyone can be surprised at it. Probably my father, if he were still alive, would take the same view himself. And yet I cannot but lament this prejudice with all my heart. It is not a question of Christians and Mahomedans, not a question of bolstering up the miserable Turkish rule, but of setting a precedent for

the enforcement of her own will by Europe. All the Powers have declared that Russia has violently broken the peace. And now we have to convince Russia by force that Europe can no longer tolerate such conduct. As did yesterday the Czar, so to-morrow Napoleon III., or perhaps a Radical English minister, may perpetrate a wrong; but if this precedent succeeds in establishing European intervention for the future, such a wrong will easily be expiated without bloodshed. Had Europe so intervened before, Charles Albert would never have fallen like a robber on Lombardy in 1848, nor the Danish question in 1851 have been settled, in order to suit Russia's convenience, to the shame of Germany. How deeply these very German States are interested in establishing this joint intervention of Europe, is obvious; but it is useless preaching to deaf ears. As to Bamberg, I know well enough how that came about. The good King Frederick William IV. is a trimmer, who does not wish to offend either us or the Russians. But his Queen will not listen to any trimming; she has chosen her side, and that passionately. It is well known what she said about the Austro-Prussian alliance of April 20. The question was how to gain time and open a back door for Prussia, to enable her to slip out of that alliance. The *mot d'ordre* came from St. Petersburg, and was immediately sent on by the Queen to her sister at Dresden. Then Bamberg was brought on to the stage, and an escape seemed to have been found. And yet the Austrian troops were ready on July 3 to enter Wallachia. Had they done so, we could have attacked the wasp's nest at Sebastopol then and there. This danger was foreseen in St. Petersburg, and fresh instructions were sent to Berlin. The result was a protest against the Austrian entry, and a threat that Prussia would back out of the alliance. But the destruction of Sebastopol has

now become a necessity, and the war will be continued until that object has been attained. For it is from Sebastopol that the Russians are perpetually threatening Constantinople, a threat which they will carry out when they have screw steamers. To this day I cannot understand Prince Menschikoff; he could have landed with 40,000 men at the Seraglio before the telegraph had given us a hint of his embarking. The Russians will not commit that blunder again, and therefore we must draw their teeth in time. Whether one or two divisions are to be annihilated in Wallachia, is a matter of perfect indifference to the Czar. His power in the East rests on Sebastopol, and for that reason we must destroy it. Now this is impossible, so long as the Danubian Principalities are not occupied by Austria. Austria, however, cannot march in without being sure of Prussia and the Diet. If Germany understood her own interests, the war could be ended this very year; but if Austria is prevented from taking any active measures, it may last for years. I am not such an optimist as the English; I am prepared for a war of three, perhaps of ten years' duration. Germany alone would be responsible for that, and would then of course have to pay the reckoning. And what might not happen in the course of three or, still more, of ten years? Will Bamberg Conferences be then any longer possible? Think only of the French. To Napoleon III., as to any founder of a dynasty in France, the English alliance is indispensable. He has known this, and till now has held to the alliance with courage and consistency. How long will it endure? Who is to guarantee to us that the outspoken sympathies of all Frenchmen of ability, the leaders of all the constitutional parties in that country, will not one day compel the French Emperor to ally himself with Russia against us? Have not

copies of Prince Gortschakoff's propositions found their way to Dresden? At Munich, I know, they had no idea of this; and yet it would be a good thing if they would study these documents at Dresden. The "Kreuz-Zeitung" party wish for nothing so much as to be rid of the Rhine provinces; they believe that Prussia would only be the gainer by being compensated for their loss with Saxony and Hanover, and would willingly buy off the Franco-Russian alliance at that cost. But what will then become of Saxony or Germany? Another danger threatens us from the party of Revolution. Kossuth writes in an intercepted letter, of which I heard to-day for the first time, that the Austro-English alliance crippled every enterprise; and that his friends must therefore wait for the not far distant day when England, now blinded, will discover the perfidy of Austria. Kossuth hit the nail on the head; the distrust in the Vienna Cabinet will not disappear till the Austrian troops actually enter the Principalities. Should Austria now be compelled to hold her hand and separate herself from France and England, a revolution in Hungary, Italy, and Germany appears inevitable. Hence Germany has the most pressing interest in seeing the war quickly ended, and this result the German Governments are perfectly able to achieve. Englishmen, however, who are aware of this, cannot be blamed when they see in the vacillating conduct of Prussia, in the Bamberg resolutions, and in the drag practically put on Austria, proofs of an avowed hostility, directed more against England than France. What disgusts us most about this Bamberg Conference is the fact of their making demands which, at the same time, the German Governments declare they will not co-operate to enforce. These Bamberg resolutions may be summed up in a sentence: England and France are to fight the war out alone, but surrender

to Germany the fruits of victory, the freedom of the Danube. To imagine seriously that the Western Powers would, after a victorious termination of the war, thus reward the German Governments for the embarrassments they are preparing for them, is an inconceivable piece of *naïveté*. In like manner the dragging in of the Greek question could not fail to offend France and England most deeply. That Greece should be a German interest, because King Otto happens to be a brother of the King of Bavaria, is incomprehensible. King Otto has paralysed 50,000 men and occasioned unnecessary bloodshed, and I cannot understand why he is allowed to remain at Athens.'

I will not trouble you with reciting my answers and objections, which suggested themselves at the moment. I assured the Prince that we agreed with Lord Clarendon so far as to think with him that there was nothing to fear from Russia so long as she was not at Constantinople. It was easy to refute the myth about Queen Elizabeth's having inspired the Bamberg Conference, a myth which seems to have originated in the story, concocted at Paris, about the four Bavarian sisters. But all my attempts to shake the false impression that a feeling of animosity against England prevailed at the German Courts, were ineffectual. The answer I got was that I had only to go there, and my candour would be put to the test on my return. It was not, indeed, denied that Lord Palmerston's vicious policy had been responsible for the coolness at present manifested in Germany against England. But, on the other hand, it was not to be forgotten that the blunders committed by the German Powers were now recoiling on themselves. And for those blunders—namely, to have allowed Russia to intervene in Hungary and to act as arbiter in the German disputes of 1850—Austria would have probably

to pay a heavier penalty than England for the arbitrary acts of Lord Palmerston.'

A propos of this last remark, the Prince referred, not without anxiety, to to-morrow's sitting of Parliament, when another attempt, it is said, is to be made to place the conduct of the war in Lord Palmerston's hands. The continuance, he remarked, of the present English Ministry, the best one at any rate now possible, depended on the Cabinet at Vienna. If that dangerous Palmerston came to the helm before Austria took action, the latter would find in him as inexorable an enemy as she did in 1848.

Of Bonapartist France the Prince spoke with a moderation and absence of prejudice now rarely met with in the leading circles of this country. In like manner he entertained no illusions about the success of the fleet then operating against Cronstadt. If fortune helped them, they would perhaps demolish some outworks, but they could never capture either Cronstadt or St. Petersburg. The Russian men-of-war blockaded in those ports were, taken all together, scarcely worth two millions and a half, and so it would hardly pay to make any great sacrifice to destroy them. The capture of Sebastopol was the main object of the war, which, as the Prince repeated more than once, must be persevered in till attained.

Altogether I can only gratefully acknowledge the frankness with which the Prince was pleased to explain the situation of affairs, and the views he himself entertained.

Postscript.—Shortly after this interview, I chanced to meet Disraeli. The leader of the Opposition spoke to me, not without malicious pleasure, of the embarrassments of the Ministry, and seemed convinced that the war would end in a compromise. 'Our Ministers,' he said, 'are in a dreadful scrape; they have done nothing, and spent all the money.'

Boulogne-sur-Mer: Sept. 4, 1854.

The Emperor Napoleon arrived here on the 31st of last month. 800 men of the Grenadier Guard had encamped here a few hours previous, together with the Guides and other household troops. His entry was a complete success. Tricolour flags were flying in all directions, and English and French joined in shouts of 'Vive l'Empereur!' The Hôtel Brighton, situated at the extreme end of the town on the land side, serves as the Imperial residence and headquarters. Telegraph wires have been laid to all points of the camp, which stretches for several miles along the coast. The hotel has a fine garden and an open situation, and looks on the castle, the former prison of the present monarch, who is fond of recalling his past history. The favourite walk is on the seashore, on the spot where the unlucky landing took place in 1840. As I threaded my way through the masses of new uniforms, the scene seemed to me somewhat theatrical; but the aptness of the arrangements shows beyond dispute that the Emperor understands admirably how to tickle the vanity of his subjects. Yesterday morning at ten o'clock arrived King Leopold and the Duke of Brabant, who had been met and welcomed by the Emperor at Calais. Military festivities were suspended, and an intended review was countermanded. The monarchs paid only a flying visit to the great camp, and at six o'clock in the evening the King embarked again with his eldest son. The guns thundered, the guard formed a double line on the quay, and there were cries of 'Vive l'Empereur!' as farewells were exchanged with much shaking of hands. I am told that King Leopold made use of the sudden ministerial crisis as a pretext for shortening his visit, which, however, brief as it was, has attained its object. To-day at ten in the morning and six in the evening the guns again thundered, to announce to the astonished

inhabitants of Boulogne the arrival and departure of the King of Portugal, who with his brother has also honoured the Imperial head-quarters with a visit of only a few hours' duration. Common folk, who, moreover, call the Emperor simply 'Napoleon,' insist that to-day's review is the result of a wager. The Emperor is said to have made a bet with the King of Portugal that he would show him 100,000 men in a quarter of an hour. The order had been received by telegraph in the camp, when 'Napoleon' drove from his hotel, and a quarter of an hour afterwards the promised 100,000 men were standing in array. *Se non è vero . . .!* Certain it is, that very considerable reinforcements of artillery and cavalry have been brought hither, and that the health of the camp has materially improved, thanks to ten continuous days of fine dry autumn weather. 80,000 men might, therefore, well have been under arms.

Prince Albert left Osborne last night. His suite consists of only six persons, but several English generals are already here. Some twenty men of the Horse Guards and twenty-five horses are awaiting his Royal Highness. As no less than six steamers accompany the Prince, it is conjectured that the Queen may be on board one of them, and that an interview on the water may precede the one on land. The Emperor was not present at the departure of King Pedro V. this evening, and has probably, therefore, gone to meet Prince Albert.

Boulogne-sur-Mer: Sept. 9, 1854.

Prince Albert has returned to England after a few days' visit. He arrived here on Monday, the 4th, at half-past eleven in the morning. The Prince, accompanied by the Duke of Newcastle, General Grey, and four aides-de-camp, entered

Boulogne harbour on board the 'Victoria and Albert' amidst the salvos of artillery and the enthusiastic cheers of the crowd. The 'Black Eagle' and the 'Vivid' escorted the royal yacht. One steam and two sailing corvettes followed in the evening, and lay at anchor outside the harbour, decked from stem to stern, and with the French flag flying at the mizenmast. The Emperor was waiting on the quay, and gave a cordial welcome to his guest. The carriage had been so drawn up that the guest, stepping in last, took his place on the left of the Emperor; but his Majesty insisted on giving the Prince his right. I mention this, because the manœuvre, which occupied the first few seconds of the interview, seemed to me to have been executed with marked ceremony. During the drive to the Hôtel Brighton, where apartments had been prepared also for the Prince, the latter handed to the Emperor an autograph letter from Queen Victoria. About four o'clock in the afternoon, the Emperor mounted his horse, in order to show the Prince the camp of the First Division, which extended from Honvault to Wimereux. The Prince wore the broad ribbon of the Legion of Honour. Among his brilliant suite I noticed Lord Cowley, Vely Pasha, and others. I happened to meet them on their return, shortly before dinner, which took place at six o'clock, and noticed plainly the Emperor's expression of satisfaction.

On Tuesday, the 5th, his Majesty went with the Prince to the camp of St. Omer, situated some thirty miles from here. The excursion took up the whole day, and they did not return till nearly eight o'clock. On Thursday, the 7th, early in the morning, I met the Emperor with the Prince in a phaeton, His Majesty himself was driving; a single groom sat behind. They were on their way to the sea, and soon the Emperor drove the thorough-breds *ventre à terre* into the waves, till the

breakers almost dashed into the carriage. About eight o'clock he paid a visit to Prince Albert on board the gaily decorated yacht. The corvettes fired the customary salutes.

Yesterday, at an early hour, eight miles from here, the last grand review was held in honour of the Prince. At eleven o'clock in the evening his Royal Highness embarked again, amidst the cheers of the dense crowd and the thunder of cannon. The departure was a fine sight, as all the English vessels, on clearing the harbour, displayed Bengal lights, and sent up rockets and showers of fireworks. The Emperor accompanied his distinguished guest on board his yacht. So far as I can judge as a tourist, the object of the visit is attained, and the Prince seems as delighted with his reception as the Emperor with his visit.

Dresden: Nov. 22, 1854.

A leisure of several weeks, spent in France, has given me the materials for the inclosed memorandum.

I had been an eyewitness in St. Petersburg of Prince Menschikoff's mission, in London of the commencement of the crisis, in Vienna of the birth pangs of the protocol of December 3, again in London of the declaration of war and the beginning of the struggle, and finally in Boulogne of the meeting between Napoleon and Prince Albert. It was, therefore, with double interest that, after the soon silenced shout of triumph over the battle of the Alma, I followed from Paris the shifting incidents of the siege of Sebastopol, and acquainted myself in some measure with the prospects and programme of the newly established Empire. My endeavour to explain to myself the impressions I received, led to this holiday task, which I may well recommend to your especial indulgence, since the unwelcome duty has now fallen to me

of reporting on the phases of the Anglo-French alliance. I have received some disclosures in Paris which it was impossible to obtain in London.

PROSPECTS AND PROGRAMME OF THE SECOND FRENCH EMPIRE.

Memorandum.

According to a view widely prevalent in and out of France, the *coup d'état* of December 2, 1851, and the consequent restoration of the Bonapartist Empire, was nothing but the successful conspiracy of a modern Catiline, nothing but the lucky *coup* of a band of bankrupt adventurers and needy speculators, nothing but a new scenic effect, of which sort so many had been put on the Parisian stage since 1789 and then disappeared.

Is this view well founded? Is the latest French Revolution the work of chance? Or is the verdict of the general *plébiscite* in favour of Napoleon's heir the logical, though perhaps the unconscious, expression of an historical necessity?

The events of the coming months will in all probability decide these questions. Meanwhile, it may be in the interest of Germany to make herself practically secure against awkward surprises, and not to undervalue the neighbour who is bound to affect her future, whether as a friend or a foe. Considering how deeply the rule of Napoleon III. has struck its roots in so short a space of time, it is surely worth while to examine its groundwork. The manner in which this now two-year-old iron dictatorship began may seem perhaps an anachronism, and an episode of those times, drunk with poison and blood, whose secret articulation was laid bare by the statesmanlike pen of a Machiavelli. But the impartial observer must confess that the 'neveu de mon oncle' keeps

firmly to the inherited policy and traditions of his house, that he has not forgotten anything, but, on the contrary, learned a good deal from the faults of his predecessors, and that silently, soberly, and with a coldly calculating spirit, he seems to be seeking out the strongest supports for his rule still provided by the convulsed and crumbling soil of France. Of course the creative power of genius must not be confused with that instinct which enables a man to take timely advantage of what has been already acquired and inherited. Louis Napoleon has manifestly not the genius of his uncle, but at the same time he does not need it; for the question is not one of creating in France anything actually new, but simply of preserving and developing what exists. For this task, to judge from his conduct up to the present time, the necessary qualifications are not wanting in the *neveu*.

To obtain a clear view of the system of Napoleon III. it will be necessary to cast a glance at the past history of his country, for there, if anywhere, the basis of his power is to be found. Objectively, and when considered in all its bearings, the movement that shook France in 1789, and afterwards convulsed the world, wears the aspect of a mighty war of races. The feudal institutions then finally destroyed in France were of foreign, that is to say of German, origin. The stationary Gallic aborigines of the plains had, equally with the Gallo-Roman inhabitants of the towns—the descendants, in other words, of Roman immigrants, and of such Gauls as had adopted the Roman speech, manners, and culture, the forefathers of the present *bourgeoisie* — been subdued by Clovis and his warlike and victorious Franks, whose fair-haired descendants paved the way for Christianity, and with the help of the priests for centuries ruled the land. From their loins sprang the royal families of the Merovin-

gians, Carolingians, and Capetians, as well as those of the Valois and Bourbons who, *primi inter pares*, guided, together with the powerful nobles, the fortunes of the land. The quarrels of the feudal lord with his own vassals or with foreign princes made up the history of France. As for the original inhabitants, scarcely anything was heard of them; it was only as priests and burghers of the towns that the Gallo-Romans retained a few rights and privileges. Richelieu needed their services to effect the centralisation of the State, and force the powerful nobles into subjection to the throne. The Cardinal not only gave this class their first political rights, but taught them the terrible lesson that the axe could also be sharpened for the members of the dominant caste. The seed thus sown in blood was destined afterwards to produce a bloody harvest, and to press only too frequently on the successors of Louis XIII. the question, whether the blessings of State unity and absolute monarchy, obtained by the first national minister of France, had not been purchased too dearly. At any rate, the heyday of absolute monarchy was shorter than its period of decline, which extends from the latter years of the reign of Louis XIV. to the year 1789. Then came the eruption which shook France to its foundations, deluged Europe, and, what is generally overlooked, awoke the primitive element of the population, overwhelming in point of numbers, from their slumber of a thousand years. When the intoxication of the rough masses and their saturnalia had subsided, educated men were forced to the conclusion that the political earthquake which had swallowed up monarchy and nobility, had also torn asunder irremediably the threads of tradition which bound together the present and the past. In fact, the nobles, in offering their title-rolls on the so-called altar of their country, burned the constitu-

tion itself, while the Jacobins, in beheading their King, struck a fatal blow at the history of their country, and broke behind them all the bridges which could have led to the re-establishment of the system they had overthrown. For the original Celtic people had no history, and the municipal privileges of the Gallo-Romans had disappeared with the men who had granted them. What the dreaded reign of the Convention had spared was destroyed by the stupid gluttons of the Directory, and the process of dissolution would have been complete had not foreign wars compelled those in power to curb the savage masses by means of military discipline. Socially and politically France was a chaos, a *tabula rasa*, when Bonaparte returned from Egypt. He, a foreigner like Clovis, subdued the land and people to his iron will; but he had not, like the Frank, any fellow-warriors or men of his own class whose rights were equal to his own. He stood alone, and therefore did not create any feudal aristocratical monarchy, but a modern Imperialism shaped after the pattern of Cæsar. In the eyes of the new monarch and autocrat, all Frenchmen were equal. To him the now powerful popular element was nothing new. The 'petit caporal' had studied the modern Gauls on the battle-field, and was treated by them as one of themselves, while in the 'Commentaries' of his Roman predecessor he found his own observations confirmed. It was not the art of winning battles, not the secrets of tactics and strategy, that Napoleon learned in Cæsar's writing, but the art of conquering and ruling the Gauls. To us foreigners Napoleon figures chiefly as a captain and a conqueror eager for new territory. Perhaps, however, this is not his greatest side; perhaps he was born to be rather a ruler than a soldier, often as he may have deceived himself on that point. At any rate he created

nothing permanent upon the battle-field. His campaigns, which only served to keep his own people under check, remained barren of result, and did not prevent foreign armies from twice occupying his capital. On the other hand, his labours as lawgiver and organiser have survived not only foreign invasion, but also all the disturbances and changes of government, which have followed each other in rapid succession since the downfall of his Empire. The France of to-day lives on the creative ideas of the Corsican, and has none but Napoleonic institutions. No one ever knew the French as did Napoleon. He knew they were easily excited, vain, and lovers of innovation, but at the same time of a practical turn of mind, and easily brought under discipline with the aid of routine. He knew also that tough perseverance and prudent self-restraint are foreign to their sanguine temperament, and that they are always ready to sacrifice real liberty to the phantom of equality. It is Napoleon's knowledge of the national character of the French that explains his system of government, namely the Code Napoléon, and the very simple machinery of administration, so admirably adapted to a country which is strongly centralised and requires governing. How practical and popular was this system, is shown clearly by the fact that it has remained unchanged for fifty years under Bourbon as well as Orleanist rule, and that in the provinces it is hardly noticed whether a *doctrinaire* professor like Guizot, or a Socialist dreamer like Ledru-Rollin, puts in the last instance the simple machinery in motion.

Enough, then, has been said to show that the movement of 1848 is in no way analogous to that which in 1789 swept away all existing institutions. The France of to-day is not only standing on the same crust of lava on which Napoleon I. created and built up his system of organic change, but she

has understood—and we cannot but confess it—how to make this volcanic soil, materially speaking, far more productive than we Germans have ever done in Germany. Notwithstanding the convulsions of 1830 and 1848, the forty years of peace have been employed in effecting an unexampled and ever advancing increase of national prosperity. After the abortive attempt to reconcile the hereditary dynasty with the ideas of 1789, the *bourgeoisie* in 1830 came into power under the firm of Louis Philippe, Lafitte, and Co., and tried to see in the Government of their citizen king the best of Republics. The good intentions and intelligence of that shrewd statesman and prince could not rid him of the taint of usurpation, or prevent a miserable collapse, his power having been destitute from the first of any national basis. His love of peace, praiseworthy enough, but from its timidity often wounding to the national vanity, and the too restricted character of a suffrage based on a property qualification, supported the policy of the Government, which appeared to be exclusively directed to the increase of the national wealth. Surprising as were the material results of this policy, still the precept of 'Enrichissez-vous,' now exalted into a maxim of State, could only breed the mischiefs of greed and avarice on one side, and those of discontent and envy on the other, stir up the non-propertied majority against the propertied minority, and open the door to electoral corruption. The Nemesis came more quickly than was, perhaps, to be expected. Half a generation sufficed to make the *bourgeoisie*, who in a narrow-minded way displayed the faults and weaknesses of the old aristocracy, without possessing their nobility of character and open-handedness, hateful to the people, and the *bourgeois* monarchy disappeared from the stage without its disappearance making the slightest impression on the *blasé* masses. Foreign events may have

hastened the catastrophe, but nothing probably could have prevented it. Thus then there was apparently a *tabula rasa* again in France, but it was only apparently. In reality it was only that the improvised July throne had been put into the lumber room. The big crater of the Revolution of 1789 threatened, indeed, to break forth again, but after all remained closed. The farce of a Republic without Republicans was played out, thanks to the fear of the Red Flag, more quickly than was to have been expected. For scarcely was the Red Flag seen in the streets of Paris, when the army, which had been kept in discipline by means of Bonapartist reminiscences and the war school of Africa, saved the country in the three days' fight of June from the horrors of anarchy. The experiments of incapable ideologists had failed to heal the social disease, and men had become sick to death of these more or less selfish quacks. The people themselves began to perceive that the vaunted panaceas of these nostrum-mongers had only increased the distress, only made the evil worse. Everyone saw that France was not to be governed by many-headed assemblies and empty speeches. The first man who boldly seized the reins was bound to become the ruler. After the terror had been weathered, the choice wavered, perhaps, for a moment between the heir of St. Louis and the heir of the Emperor who had died in exile. But the Duke of Bordeaux contented himself with receiving deputations at Frohsdorf, while Louis Napoleon hastened to Paris, got elected, and sprang boldly into the breakers. The army was gained over as quickly as the peasantry in favour of the new Napoleon, and the modern Octavianus Augustus could spare himself the trouble of wresting Cæsar's inheritance from any rivals. He simply had them imprisoned and conducted across the frontier. His name, the rallying cry, 'Les Bonaparte, c'est

nous,' a few clever phrases, and a well-timed resolution were sufficient, with the help of universal suffrage, to furbish up the stage scenery of the Empire which had been practically existing for a year. The part he had studied in imprisonment and exile was easily played. There was no need to shrink from acts of force directly it could be made to appear that the *restitutio in integrum* was the expression of the national will. In the actual machine of government, which had been perfected by the electric telegraph, no change was made, but all officials suspected of Orleanism or Republicanism, especially in the provinces, were replaced by devoted instruments, at least a formal equipoise of the budget was authoritatively restored, and at the same time extensive public works were undertaken.

It would be superfluous to describe in detail the machinery by which Napoleon I. centralised his system of government. I will merely cast a glance at the two compact corporations, which, properly speaking, are the only estates of the French Empire, namely the clergy and the army. The hereditary nobility improvised by Napoleon was an abortion, and has no more claim to be considered an estate than the descendants of the ancient noble families, since the political rights intended for them, but which were always only illusory, have long since disappeared, like their titles and possessions. In the First Napoleon's time there were practically only two estates, the soldier class and the priest class. In these two Napoleon III. had sought and found the main supports of his throne. Universal conscription, the basis of the constitution of the army, the First Consul had found already existing, on the 18th of Brumaire; but nevertheless the army itself owes to him the peculiar organisation which it still retains. In vain did succeeding Governments attempt to efface this Napoleonic

stamp, the most remarkable feature of which is the democratic equality expressed in the saying, 'Chaque soldat français porte le bâton de maréchal dans sa giberne.' Unyielding strictness when on service, and comradely treatment when off it, brilliant rewards and distinctions, these were the simple artifices with which the Corsican Imperator understood how to attach his legions to his person, so long as victory and glory remained true to his colours. The Frenchman is a born soldier, and obeys anyone who understands how to command. Success, however, is the *sine quâ non* condition of the Bonapartist system, which cannot stand the ordeal of defeat. The army would have fought for Charles X. and for Louis Philippe, had those sovereigns only understood how to make use of it. The longing to take revenge on the *pékin*, grown insolent after the July *émeutes* and the tumults of February, may have unconsciously contributed more to victory during the June fighting than the resolute conduct of the African generals. The French officer has quite a different position to that of his brethren in any other army. One would look in vain among the officers of French regiments for that spirit of aristocratic chivalry which distinguishes the armies of Germany and Austria. The relations of the private soldiers to their leaders resemble those of the Russian peasants to their Pope. Just as those peasants pay respect to their pope only in the church, and out of it scarcely regard him as their equal, so the French soldier treats his superiors. 'Ce qu'il y a de mieux dans notre armée,' said a common soldier to a Prussian officer in the camp at Boulogne, 'c'est nous ; puis viennent les sous-officiers qui ne valent pas grand' chose, et enfin les officiers qui ne valent pas le diable ; mais cela ne fait rien, la consigne est là, et la consigne, voyez-vous, c'est la consigne.' This *naïve* avowal contains a truth which the

present Emperor has recognised and laid to heart. And that is the very reason why he has far less to fear from victorious generals, than on the Continent is usually supposed. Lamoricière and Changarnier might serve as examples. Of course the army must also have practical proof given them that a Napoleon is at their head, who honours them as the first estate in the country, and affords them at times an opportunity to wipe out old reverses and gain new laurels. In addition to all this, an Imperator whom his troops never see leading them under fire, a Napoleon of peace, would run the risk of having his soldiers running wild into prætorians, if there were no moral counterpoise strong enough to check such demoralisation at the outset. This moral counterpoise the Emperor seems now to be seeking in the Roman Catholic priesthood. In so doing he is adhering to the traditions of the First Consul, who, although no bigoted Roman Catholic, recalled for political reasons the scattered priests and restored the broken altars, without heeding the murmurs of his greybeards. The Church, it is true, is not an institution of police, but ever since Constantine's time she has always been utilised by the great ones of the earth. On the other hand, no doubt, emperors and kings, without being conscious of it, have often been the mere tools of ambitious priests. The Reign of Terror and the wars of the Republic evoked in France a reaction against Voltaire and his pupils, by whose teachings the real people had been less disturbed than might be supposed. Thus religion found to a certain extent a virgin soil in Napoleonic France. The seed germinated slowly. Fostered and tended with care by the Bourbons of the elder line, neglected but not molested under the Government of Louis Philippe, the Roman Catholic Church, after the fertilising shower of the February Revolution, achieved

conquests on French soil which surpassed her keenest expectations. 'The children of Voltaire,' exclaims Montalembert, 'have remembered that they are descendants of the Crusaders.' The deep religious movement, which made itself prominent among the lower classes, must be distinguished, indeed, from the factitious agitation of Ultramontane fanatics in the columns of the 'Univers.' Veuillot and his friends are the representatives of an extreme tendency, the dangerous character of which was clearly perceived by the real leaders of the clergy. Faithful to the traditions of the Gallican Church, these leaders are conspicuous for their genuine piety and profound theological learning. They are not afraid to die the death of martyrs on Parisian barricades, nor need they fear comparison with the brightest stars of another epoch. Just as the tragic end of the Archbishop of Paris during the June fighting stirred the deepest feelings of the masses, so the speech of the learned Bishop of Orleans on his entrance into the Academy on the 9th of November made a genuine sensation among the educated classes. Dupanloup was hailed as a worthy successor of Bossuet and Fénelon. Unless all signs deceive, a reconciliation of the Roman Catholic Church with modern science is now preparing in the bosom of the sorely tried French clergy—a reconciliation based on a higher synthesis than Voltaire and his disciples could ever have dreamed of. How science, on the other hand, is seeking to meet the Church half-way, is shown, among other things, by the remarkable book of the democrat Jean Reynaud, 'Philosophie religieuse, Terre et Ciel' (Paris: Furne, 1854). The author, with an earnestness of purpose unusual in France, searches for links from the pre-Christian faiths of ancient Gaul to reconcile practically the latest astronomical and geological discoveries with the

resolutions of the Councils and the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church. All these signs of the time have not escaped the keen eye of Napoleon III., and he has already, out of gratitude for the services rendered him by the country clergy during his last electioneering campaigns, bestowed more attention to the religious wants of the people than his uncle ever could or cared to do. Immediately on his accession, he declared that he would do more than the Bourbons for the clergy if they supported him, because he was stronger than the Bourbons ever were. The boldest and, perhaps, the most hazardous step taken by the Emperor in this direction is the recall of the Jesuits. This step was not taken officially, of course, out of deference to public opinion; but what it was possible to do secretly, to protect that influential society and gain them over to the Government, was done and is being done daily. A house in the Rue de Sèvres, purchased under a strange name, provides a lodging for the sons of Loyola, who have also removed one of their best known educational institutions from Belgium to the Rue de Vaugirard in Paris. Their influence is daily in the ascendant, and already two Jesuits, Father Ponlevoy and Father Ravignan, are named as persons who are supposed to know more of State secrets than the ministers Fould and Drouyn de Lhuys. Rows of fashionable carriages are to be seen daily before the quiet house in the Rue de Sèvres. Countless emissaries keep up direct communication with the army, especially with the troops in the Crimea, whose chaplains are said to belong mostly to this order. It is noticeable that the Jesuits in France have not a word to say in favour of the extreme views represented by the 'Univers,' but, on the contrary, appear to side, and that not unostentatiously, with its most determined opponent, the Bishop of Orleans. Apart from home politics, moreover, this secret

alliance of Bonapartism with the Jesuits may have a certain meaning and importance. At any rate, it marks the contrast between the system of Napoleon III. and that of Louis Philippe. It is a well-recognised symptom of the social and political disease from which Europe is suffering, that the two opposing principles which govern in turn the history of mankind, namely authority and liberty, should have been embodied in two secret societies. These societies have only one feature in common, that their members attach a higher value to their membership than to kinship, country, and nationality. Granted that it would be an exaggeration to regard everything that comes to the light of day as an exhibition secretly prearranged, it is certain, nevertheless, that the orders of Freemasons and Jesuits have been fighting with each other for centuries with mines and countermines, whose explosions exercise an influence on the events passing on the world's stage of which the leading actors, to say nothing of the spectators, have frequently no notion. It deserves remark, therefore, that if the Freemason Louis Philippe looked to the French lodges for support, Louis Napoleon does not at least despise the assistance of the Jesuits.

The preceding observations will suffice to show the character of the soil on which the Bonapartism, whose roots it was neglected to extirpate in 1815, has been able suddenly to shoot up before our eyes, while Royalty perished for want of nurture.

It remains still to cast a glance at the programme of foreign policy, which is the logical development of the above premises.

Nowhere is foreign so intimately connected with domestic policy as in France. Napoleon III. knows better than any man, that the vain nation, spoiled by the victories of his

uncle, has never forgiven the Bourbons for having been brought back to Paris by the help of foreign bayonets. He knows also, and has himself often enough repeated, that it was the *bourgeois* monarch's love of peace that mainly exposed him to the contempt of the French. That Louis Philippe respected the treaties of 1815 was, perhaps, his greatest merit; but it cannot be denied that neither he, nor his ministers, nor his Chambers, so full of vagaries, had any policy. The framework of a national foreign system, such as had led Charles X. to negotiate secretly for an offensive and defensive alliance between France and Russia, had vanished with that king in the July days, and the hatred with which the Emperor Nicholas pursued the revolutionary usurper made it hopeless to reconnect the broken threads. Apart from that, an alliance with the Orleanists would have encountered serious objections in Russia from the simple fact that, owing to the talkative and impressionable nature of the French, a Government dependent on the majority of the Chambers would have been utterly unable to arrange any settled programme of foreign policy, much less to carry it out. Napoleon III., on the contrary, not only *can* but *must* have a system, and in seizing the reins of the newly founded military monarchy he was perfectly consistent with himself. Well thought out, and thoroughly adapted to the circumstances, his system is no mere whim of the moment, and deserves for that very reason the earnest attention of the Continent. A Napoleon who would sanction, like Louis Philippe, the treaties of 1815, and not attempt to seize the first chance that offered of repudiating those clauses which, really or presumedly, were directed against France, would, in the eyes of the army and nation, cease to be a Napoleon. The revision of the map of Europe, as adjusted by the Con-

gress of Vienna, is no mere fancy of a hired journalist, but a fixed and favourite idea of the new Emperor. This revision is not to be confounded with the dream of a French universal monarchy, erected on the point of the sword. The French are sober enough to perceive that, if the uncle, with all his genius, suffered shipwreck in that enterprise, the nephew would have no prospect of success. 'We have no idea of conquest' keep repeating the mouthpieces of the party in power; 'France is big enough; we are not hankering after the Rhine frontier, or any other extension of our territory. If we have been compelled, under the greatest general of his time, to surrender our conquests, and twice to endure the shame of a foreign invasion, how should we now, without such a general, provoke the national sentiment of our neighbours, and especially of Germany?'

This language is perhaps more honest than might be supposed. What the present French Empire aims at, at any rate in the first instance, are not territorial, but moral conquests. The next object of ambition is to obtain that hegemony which for the last few years has been practically wielded by the Emperor Nicholas. The champion of the Conservative principle, the terror of demagogues, the dictator of Continental Governments, the protector, not of the Confederation of the Rhine, but of the Germanic Confederation, that is the part which the Emperor of Russia has played till the outbreak of the present war, and which the Emperor of the French has now already begun to assume. 'Moi, brouillé avec l'Empereur?' exclaimed Persigny, on leaving the Ministry. 'Quelle idée! Je l'ai fait Président, je l'ai fait Empereur, je le ferai dictateur de l'Europe.' One might smile at this as a mere flourish of trumpets, were it not that prophecies of this sort have already come to pass, and that all which has

occurred since the days of Strasburg and Boulogne, especially during the last two years, points to the fact that we have to do with an *illuminate*, in whose schemes of adventure it is impossible not to see a certain method. Scarcely had the successful *coup d'état* of December 2 obtained the much-vaunted prompt and 'hearty' recognition of England, and the danger consequently disappeared of that European coalition for which the secret memorandum of London was to pave the way, when that 'European Second of December' was put on the stage, of which we have since then heard so much. The Cabinets were still exchanging endless and fruitless despatches about the question of Napoleon's recognition, when M. de Lavalette, who had been sent to Constantinople as Ambassador, and since then ostensibly disavowed, picked the quarrel about the Holy Places, which was to kindle the general war that Napoleon needed. The attitude of the Northern Powers, the secret despatches of Vienna and Berlin, and lastly the refusal of the title of brother at St. Petersburg, afforded a welcome pretext for hastening action. In January 1853 the plan was already laid to break up the Northern alliance, and that, indeed, in the East. The moderation affected at first was only a mask, employed to make sure of the English statesmen, and gain them over. While St. Petersburg, Vienna, and Berlin were negotiating, Paris was taking action. It was well known that at Constantinople converged the most sensitive threads, the entanglement of which was bound to excite the passionate nature of the Czar, who, though spoilt by success, was at bottom a lover of peace, and speculations were built on the blunders which that passionateness would occasion. Menschikoff's mission was greeted with exultation at Paris. 'Maintenant,' exclaimed Persigny with joy, 'nous entraînerons l'Angleterre.' They knew there that

the Russian Ambassador Extraordinary would never rest contented with settling the wantonly provoked quarrel about the Key. They could, therefore, in order to pacify public opinion in France and Europe, and especially in England, agree to concessions which, being unfortunately interpreted on all sides as a prudent yielding, served to strengthen the belief that France desired peace, while in reality they caused the Gordian knot to be still more firmly tied. At the very moment when peace seemed at St. Petersburg assured, in May 1853 came the first real move in the game, the despatch of the French fleet to Salamis. As is well known, the French Ministers, alarmed at the boldness of this step, which was proposed by Persigny, unanimously protested against it. 'Quoi!' exclaimed the Emperor's trusted adviser, 'oubliez-vous que nous avons un Napoléon à la tête du gouvernement? Ne s'agit-il pas de prouver à la nation, à l'armée, et surtout à l'Europe, que nous ne reculons pas devant une guerre avec la Russie? Ne s'agit-il pas avant tout d'entraîner l'Angleterre? Et l'Angleterre, ce n'est pas la cour, ni le conseil de la reine, encore moins Lord Aberdeen. Il faut leur forcer la main et c'est en roulant l'opinion publique que nous l'obligerons à faire cause commune avec nous. C'est par une démonstration navale que l'opinion publique se réveillera en Angleterre. Nous serons forcés de revenir de Salamine, dites-vous? Qu'importe? Ce sera reculer pour mieux sauter, car nous entrerons dans le Bosphore avec les Anglais.' In vain did Fould and Drouyn de Lhuys attempt to carry their point, that at least a previous understanding should be come to on the subject with the English Cabinet. The Emperor decided against them. 'Persigny a raison,' he said; 'télégraphiez à la flotte de se rendre à Salamine; nous annoncerons le fait accompli à l'Angleterre.' In this narra-

tive, which has been derived from the best sources, lies the secret of the Eastern complication. For if the despatch of the fleet to Salamis was no mere freak of a despot, as was then and is still believed everywhere, especially in London, but a well-considered move, calculated with an eye to public opinion in England, to persevere in believing, as they do in St. Petersburg, that England has dragged France into the war, is simply to cling to a delusion. The exact contrary is the case. Even if a war with Russia were regarded, especially in England, as sooner or later unavoidable, still the two opponents would perhaps have kept their swords in the scabbard for some years, had not a second been found on the Seine to urge on the duel in his own interests. The only thing wanted was to wake the British lion from his slumber; when once that was done, the rest was bound to follow of its own accord. And everything went as was wished. The Russians crossed the Pruth, and public opinion in England impétuously demanded war with Russia and an alliance with Napoleon. Slowly, almost timorously, the Coalition Ministry, divided amongst themselves, responded to the call, and the British vessel of State, well-nigh without a pilot, went helplessly into the breakers which had been so artfully prepared. 'We are drifting into war,' complained Lord Clarendon, while the 'great and powerful ally' was insinuating himself with rare dexterity and feigned deference into the confidence of the British statesmen. After the silent Imperial *parvenu* had succeeded in neutralising all hostile influences, particularly the antipathies of the Court, he undertook practically, in secret concert with Lord Palmerston, the direction of the policy of both the Western Powers.

Nothing of all this was seen or known at St. Petersburg. General Castelbajac, who had taken the 'l'Empire c'est la

paix' in sober earnest, may have contributed not a little, without either knowing or wishing it, to increase the blindness of the Russian Cabinet, and leave them under the dangerous delusion that the Anglo-French alliance was merely a phantom, which would vanish directly it was grasped. Even the Russian agents did something to thicken the veil which at the critical moment concealed from the Czar the real position of affairs; and the politicians, professional and non-professional, who towards the end of 1853 hoped to purchase a Russo-French alliance with German territory, have more on their consciences than they like to dream of. But those gentlemen may rest assured once for all, that an alliance with Russia, at any rate in the first instance, is an impossibility in Imperial France. Legitimate Royalty, which had to thank Alexander I. mainly for its restoration, might, perhaps, have sought later a support in Russia. The crowned son of the Revolution despises this support, and cannot possibly ally himself with the Czar; if for this reason alone, that the position which the latter assumed towards the Continent is the chief object of Napoleonic ambition. If the Tuileries to-day had no higher aspirations than little Thiers, and were content with the frontier of the Rhine, the hints thrown out at Stuttgard by Prince Gortschakoff would have fallen on a thankful soil, and not have been answered, as they were, with an almost scornful silence. A prize so paltry may be contemned, in view of the higher object of ambition, which, as already pointed out, is nothing less than the reconstitution of the State system of Europe, the revision of the treaties of 1815. For the attainment of that object, Russia, as is well known, never can and never will offer a hand; the only means for that end can be the English alliance. Louis Napoleon, like Louis XVIII. and Louis Philippe, has learned this lesson in exile, that the sympathies of the

British press and the London Stock Exchange are indispensable to anyone who undertakes to found a dynasty in France. In the eyes of Napoleon III. the English alliance is a contract resting on reciprocity. France supports by force of arms English interests in the East, and expects in return that England will after this war leave the Emperor Napoleon a free hand on the Continent, and connive as tacitly at the 'European' *coup d'état* as she connived at the French one. The future will show whether this calculation is correct. In any case the grave political errors committed by the three Northern Powers since the crisis began, have brought nearer that general war the Continental fruits of which Napoleon flatters himself he can purchase with possibly a trifling sacrifice, and here in Paris its outbreak next spring is regarded as inevitable. The general plan of the war is reported to be settled. The fall of Sebastopol, or, what is always possible, the defeat of the allies, will not, it is said, affect it as a whole. As soon as the Baltic is free from ice, the English fleet, forming the extreme left wing, is to commence operations, supported by a French squadron. About 60,000 English and French troops are intended to be taken on board, and the Swedish army of 40,000 men is counted on, which is already on a war footing. With the assistance of a number of gunboats, a vigorous attack is to be made on Cronstadt and St. Petersburg; the fortresses of the Bay of Finland, which were fully reconnoitred last year, are to be taken, and Finland, and if possible the Baltic provinces, are to be seized and given to Sweden. Bonapartist France requires, indeed, in the North a strong Scandinavia as a faithful ally. On the extreme right wing the Anglo-French and Turks are to continue their previous operations, and extend them to Asia Minor also, as well as the Caucasus and Bessarabia. In the centre,

Austria would have to undertake the main conduct of the great war, the object of her attack being the strong offensive position of Russia in the high plains of Poland, to assail which, it is not disguised, the co-operation of Austria is indispensable. And yet people in Paris are already speculating on the restoration of Poland as a natural ally, whose services Bonapartism might find useful against Russia or Germany. But though the Polish kingdom of the future is one of the main elements, it is certain, in the programme of Napoleon III., the demarcation of its frontiers has never yet been considered, since the territorial sacrifices to be expected from Austria and Prussia could not possibly at this moment be discussed, and all questions of detail depend on the success of the war. Only, care appears to have been taken that the Polish emigration, in the event of such a thing being announced at Vienna after the rejection of Austria's contemplated ultimatum, should be governed by the military dispositions of the Austrian generals.

Such is an outline of the map of Europe which the prisoner of Ham drafted, and after his escape communicated with great confidence of success to several personages of my acquaintance; among others, to the Earl of Westmoreland. The sceptic smile of the English diplomatist was answered by a 'rira bien qui rira le dernier,' and Napoleon added a friendly invitation to pay a visit to the Emperor of the French as soon as he was installed in the Tuileries.

A still more important point than either Poland or Scandinavia in the Bonapartist plans of the future is presented by Italy. The Italian question, for obvious reasons, is now left untouched and postponed to a later time; but 'the young man of Forli,' formerly initiated into the intrigues of the Carbonari, and as Carlo Alberto a member of that secret con-

federacy, is far more Italian than French. The 'liberation of Italy' remains a hobby, if only because it is connected with the mystic side of Bonapartism. It is well known that Napoleon I. sought to persuade himself and his subjects that he was the legitimate successor of Charlemagne. Like that Emperor of the Franks, Napoleon III. would now wish to secure by a march to Rome the consecration of his crown, and therewith the exclusive right, as protector of the Holy See, to treat the Italian princes as his vassals.

If it is asked now by what means these soaring schemes are to be realised, the answer is that the French army will early in January, that is in about six weeks, have 550,000 men under arms. Out of these, it is true, about 130,000 are now in Algeria, Rome, Athens, and the Crimea. With 120,000 men, assisted by the newly organised police, it is hoped to be able to keep Paris and France in order. If another 50,000 are sent to the Baltic on board the fleet, there will remain in the camp at Boulogne an available reserve of only 250,000 men. These are to support Austria, if necessary, in the centre, or be employed against us in case Prussia and the rest of Germany make a show of maintaining their neutrality by force of arms.

If the above schemes contain the germ of a future quarrel on Napoleon's part with Austria and Germany, they furnish the most serious warning to all the German Governments to remain united and bring to a speedy end the now seemingly inevitable war with Russia, but in no case to allow the French, not even as friends, to set foot on German soil. By so doing we may be able, at least later on, to oppose to our arrogant Western neighbour—this time without foreign help—the firmly wielded power of an undivided Germany.

Paris: Nov. 17, 1854.

CHAPTER V.

LONDON.—1855.

Audience at Windsor Castle—Conversation with Prince Albert—Ministerial Crisis—The British Constitution—Sufferings of the Army in the Crimea—Defective Organisation—Prevalent Distrust—Fall of Lord Aberdeen—Lord Palmerston Prime Minister—Reorganisation of the Crimean Army—Treaty with Austria of Dec. 2, 1854—Death of the Emperor Nicholas—The Four Points—Lord John Russell's Mission to Vienna—Failure of the Vienna Conference—The French Emperor and Empress in England—Efforts for Peace—Return Visit of Queen Victoria to Paris—My Mission to Lisbon.

My first duty, after returning in January 1855 to London, was to present to Queen Victoria my new credentials, which had been rendered necessary by the change of Government in Saxony. The Queen received me at Windsor, where I was invited to dine and spend the night. It was a cold winter's day, and the frost on the rails delayed the express train which conveyed Lord Aberdeen, Lord Clarendon, and other ministers, as well as myself, to the Castle.

I was just hastening to dress for dinner, when Lord Clarendon called me into the gallery and asked me if I had not forgotten my credentials. These were quickly brought, and I delivered them, agreeably to English etiquette, in my travelling dress. The Queen herself had already begun her toilette, and quickly put on a dressing gown to receive Lord Clarendon and myself.

Being thus duly accredited, I could take my place at the dinner table. The Court observes the usual English custom,

the Queen rising with her ladies when the dinner is over, and leaving the men alone to sip their claret.

Prince Albert motioned me to his side and began a conversation in German, of which his neighbour, Lord Aberdeen, could not understand a word. Opinions, therefore, could be exchanged with perfect freedom, and I was indebted to the Prince for an accurate account of the situation as it had developed itself during my absence. On the subject of German relations he spoke out very openly and with much displeasure, and complained in particular that the vacillation of the King of Prussia and the indecision of Manteuffel were bound to frustrate the hope of bringing the Emperor of Russia to reason.

English feeling had completely changed. Even Lord Aberdeen had resolved to prosecute the war with vigour. As I looked at that excellent old gentleman, and saw how he sat there in the icy apartment shivering and chattering his teeth, I involuntarily asked myself whether he was the man to battle with the storm, and lead England safely through the dangers of a European war. For a storm there was, which was shaking the British Constitution to its base, if not imperilling its very existence.

The British Constitution is no mere piece of paper. It is not to be found within the four corners of Magna Charta or the Bill of Rights. It is an arsenal, not to say a medley, of written laws, judicial decisions, Norman privileges, Saxon customs, Danish survivals, ancient precedents, and half-forgotten resolutions of Parliament. Every sovereign of England, the Tudors as well as the Stuarts, Cromwell as well as the Hanoverian dynasty, Queen Elizabeth as well as Queen Victoria, has helped to build up, and every session of Parliament to perfect, this edifice of ages. It is a labyrinth to

which a knowledge of public opinion affords the only clue. But this very public opinion is but a toy for big children, a kite which rises or falls with every breath of air, and which none can fly but those who understand the game to be a game.

The ship of State 'Britannia' had sprung a leak, and was rolling almost without a pilot in the trough of the sea. Men's eyes were opened to the real magnitude of the war, which had been so recklessly begun; after the fever came the cold fit. Sir Charles Napier had slipped away from the Baltic ice with his task unaccomplished. In the Crimea the gallant armies had won desperate battles, but, so to speak, not a foot of land. Sebastopol, changed by the genius of Todleben into a fortified camp, still defied the allies and their newly perfected artillery.

An unusually hard winter, and the storms which in an inland sea like the Euxine are always extremely dangerous, and which wrecked a number of transports, had so weakened the victorious English army, that in the beginning of 1855 only about 10,000 combatants remained, all of whom, partly in the trenches and partly in the camp, now converted into a morass, seemed doomed to perish from hunger, frost, and fever. When the news of these privations and sufferings reached England, and was served up to the public twice a day by the newspapers with exaggerated zeal, a cry of indignation arose, and, as always happens in such cases, the blame was heaped on the men, not the system. Anything more absurd than this system can hardly be conceived. The responsible Secretary of State for War, the Duke of Newcastle, a member of the Cabinet, was also Minister for the Colonies. Under him was the Secretary at War, Sidney Herbert. In addition to these, there was a Commander-in-Chief of the

army, Lord Hardinge, an excellent old soldier and successor to the post which the Duke of Wellington till his death had filled with almost absolute authority. Theoretically, indeed, the Commander-in-Chief was the servant of the responsible Secretary of State, but practically the latter followed, as a civilian, the inspiration of his military subordinate. Now, as the Secretary of State again did nothing without consulting the Queen, or in other words Prince Albert, the public, of course, fastened the responsibility for everything upon the 'petty German Prince.' At such a moment, there was nothing too absurd to pass muster as probable. Thus, a silly report was spread that the Prince was willing to sacrifice the army in the Crimea out of love for his German relatives, and had given Lord Raglan secret orders to carry on a sham campaign and spare the Russians as much as possible. Anything more senseless could scarcely be conceived. The anger of the excited public vented itself nevertheless, not directly on the Prince, but on his pretended instruments. Lord Raglan, Lord Hardinge, and the Duke of Newcastle, and in the last instance the Premier, Lord Aberdeen, were the men who were loaded with contumely of every kind, and held to blame that the Tartar's story of the capture of Sebastopol remained day after day still unconfirmed, while the corpses of 20,000 British soldiers were mouldering on the barren steppes of the Crimea, and the rest of the army was perishing from cold and hunger. Several English officers, who went through that rigorous winter, have since told me with a smile that they first learned of their sufferings from the newspapers. But there was no exaggeration too great to find belief, and nobody doubted that the days of the Ministry were reckoned.

When Parliament now assembled on January 23, the

House of Commons showed that they reflected faithfully the feverish excitement of the country. Meanwhile, Lord Aberdeen's position was no enviable one. Disraeli, the leader of the Opposition, would have taken good care, even if Lord Derby had not been there to check him, not to pull the chestnuts out of the fire. A direct attack, the success of which could not be doubted, would have morally obliged the Conservatives to form a Government. But where were the materials for that Government to be found in the midst of such a storm? The task of belling the cat was left, therefore, to chance, or, as frequently happens in such situations, to a so-called independent member of Parliament. The little, plain-looking, but somewhat popular member for Sheffield, Mr. Roebuck, was only too happy to undertake this part. He was plucky, and belonged to those 'qui ne doutent de rien,' as the French say. He moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the conduct of the war, in order to ascertain the causes which had reduced the army in the Crimea to such a miserable plight. It is possible that this motion, if not actually inspired by Lord Palmerston, had received his approval. Nothing more, however, would perhaps have been heard of the matter, had not the leader of the House, Lord John Russell, long since impatient of playing second fiddle in the Cabinet, given the motion an unusual importance. He at once resigned, on the ground, as he explained to the Cabinet, that in the present state of feeling in the House the Committee of Inquiry could not be evaded. People aptly compared this selfish makebate to the rat which leaves the sinking ship: it was truly said of him that he, by his retirement, and not Roebuck, was upsetting the Ministry, and would cause the greatest embarrassment to the Crown. But Lord John stuck to his resolution and went. He had already endeavoured to

induce Lord Aberdeen to hand over to Lord Palmerston the War Department, administered by the unpopular Duke of Newcastle, in the hope of thus wearing out and discrediting his colleague, and securing for himself the future premiership. Palmerston himself had no desire whatever to become Minister of War; and even when the Duke of Newcastle himself offered to retire, in order to save the Ministry, persisted in declining the post, declaring that he could not administer the War Office half as well as the Duke. Russell's wholly unexpected and unexplained retirement drew after it the request of the Whigs in the Cabinet for their release. Thus the Aberdeen Ministry was already in a state of complete disruption when the debate on Roebuck's motion commenced. That debate ended on the night of January 29 by the motion being carried. Three hundred and five voted for it, and only 148 against it; so that there was a majority of 157 against the Ministers.

I had accepted an invitation to dinner that evening, and was not able to reach Westminster Palace till near eleven o'clock. The House was crowded, and there was no room in the seats reserved for the diplomatic body, either for the French Ambassador or myself. Some friendly members of Parliament took compassion on us, and invited us to their seats in the gallery inside the House. Thus I was able to listen comfortably to Disraeli's sarcastic speech and Gladstone's brilliant defence, and after the order of 'Strangers withdraw' had announced, about three o'clock in the morning, the close of the debate, to await in the large hall the result of the division. Walewski, on hearing it, seemed delighted, and whispered in my ear, 'In eight days Lord Palmerston will be Prime Minister—that is exactly what we want.'

As the Tories had voted for Roebuck's motion, and formed the most compact and numerous party of the Opposition, the Queen immediately sent for their leader, Lord Derby. The Earl declined to undertake the responsibility of forming an effective Cabinet at such a critical moment, unless Lord Palmerston and the Peelites would consent to serve with him, and left it with the Queen to attempt other combinations, promising, however, in the event of those attempts failing, to place his services at her Majesty's disposal. The Queen now sent for Lord John Russell. Self-sufficient as ever, he undertook the task, but he reaped what he had sown, and was forced in a few days to confess his inability to undertake the Government. Finally the Queen turned to Lord Palmerston. This was a hard resolve to make, but it was a necessity. Palmerston not only had the ear of the House and the favour of the people, but, what was now almost more important than either, the full confidence of Napoleon, without whose assistance it was hopeless to think of bringing the war to an honourable termination. Prince Albert, who knew the noble Lord pretty well, and who said to me once afterwards, 'I cannot respect that man, for he always prefers his own interests to those of the nation,' was too good a patriot not to see that Palmerston had become the man of the hour. Moreover, there was no disguising the fact that events had to some extent justified Lord Palmerston, and that his over-hasty recognition of the *coup d'état* had rendered possible that alliance which was more necessary now than ever. Thus then the Prince and Lord Palmerston, standing on the two antipodes of politics, joined hands, and together saved the country and the Parliamentary system from dangers which threatened general confusion, and had already compromised the reputation of all the leading statesmen. Lord Palmerston found no

difficulty in effecting an agreement with the Peelites. Sir James Graham and Gladstone, Cardwell and Sidney Herbert, accepted the posts offered to them in the new Cabinet. But no confidence could be placed in these weathercock Peelites, and after only a few days they upset everything again by declaring their intention of quitting the Cabinet if the Committee of Inquiry, which had been voted by the Commons, were actually appointed. Lord Palmerston had had forty years' experience of the House of Commons. He knew that any opposition was impossible; but he knew also that if Roebuck and his Committee were left to themselves, the matter would soon cease to be dangerous, and come to nothing. He, therefore, accepted the resignations of his colleagues, and reconstructed the Cabinet by taking in Lord John Russell and some of the Whigs. For the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, in the place of Mr. Gladstone, he found an able auxiliary in Lord Clarendon's brother-in-law, Sir Cornewall Lewis. The latter was not only a distinguished scholar, but, as he soon proved himself, an able and conscientious man of business. If he lacked the brilliant qualities and especially the eloquence of Gladstone, he soon succeeded in gaining the confidence of Parliament by his calm firmness and moderation. The illusion of his predecessor, who had hoped to defray the expenses of the war by a mere increase of taxation, he discarded altogether, and the loan which he proposed met with universal approval. The war had already cost forty-six millions sterling, and nobody yet could see its end. The choice also of the old Scotchman, Lord Panmure, who now undertook the undivided duties of War Minister, was a happy one.

The army was soon furnished with the necessary reinforcements, and in the spring of 1855 Lord Raglan had again 30,000 British troops under his colours, not including the

German and Turkish foreign legions. The Commissariat also left nothing more to be desired, and the profusion of food and clothing supplied to the troops enabled them to help the famishing French, whose sufferings and privations were well known to have been equally severe, however little the strictly watched French newspapers ventured to reveal them to the public.

The diplomatic situation had also somewhat cleared and improved both for France and England. Austria had concluded a Convention with them on December 2, 1854, which, though not making Austria an immediate belligerent, formulated, nevertheless, certain eventualities, under which the Vienna Cabinet promised to declare war against Russia. The bases proposed as the conditions of a permanent peace had been arranged in concert under 'four Points.' It was fortunate for England that Lord Palmerston succeeded in keeping Lord Clarendon at the Foreign Office, obviously the best man for the place, as he had been there when the Eastern complications began, and had conducted all the subsequent negotiations. Besides that, he enjoyed the favour of the Emperor and Empress of the French. The latter knew him from his youth, Clarendon having been one of the intimate friends of her mother, the Countess Montijo, at Madrid.

Altogether, the state of things at the beginning of March was such as to remind me again of Brunnow's remark that the worst situations are those which present no prospect of escape. Everyone was sick of the war, but neither Russia nor the Western Powers could think of peace without incurring humiliation. Russia had been several times defeated on her own soil, notwithstanding the numerical superiority of her troops; she still maintained, it was true, her position in Sebastopol, but she had not been able to drive the intruders

away. The latter had won some Pyrrhic victories, at a disproportionate sacrifice of blood and money, and after several months had gained nothing but the ground occupied by their camps.

On March 2, during a walk with the Prussian *chargé d'affaires*, Count Lazar Henckel, an old colleague at St. Petersburg, we discussed the situation. My conviction was that nothing but some untoward event could untie the Gordian knot. I cited several instances from history to show how Providence in such cases had frequently solved the difficulty in a wholly unexpected way.

'But, in Heaven's name!' asked the sober-minded Henckel, 'what sort of an untoward event is now to help us?'

'Well, then,' I answered, 'what if, for example, the Emperor Nicholas, who, as both of us know, is the author of all this confusion, were suddenly to die? Would not his successor—if he himself cannot do so—be able to offer the hand for peace?'

'Perhaps so,' added my friend; 'but according to our latest news from St. Petersburg the Emperor is quite well, and Dr. Mandt has not the smallest anxiety about his health.'

Thus we parted, to find ourselves together again a few hours later at the Travellers' Club. Henckel was sitting by the entrance to the dining-room, and motioned to me to take a seat at his table.

'You were one of the conspirators,' he began, 'if you only knew it. On reaching home, I found a telegram lying on my table, informing me that the Emperor Nicholas had died suddenly this afternoon, just at the time when we were speaking about him. There you have your untoward event! Let us hope it will soon bring us peace!'

The news spread like wildfire, and was received, as could

have been anticipated, with utterances of hope for peace. But peace still seemed impossible, for the national feeling in Russia, especially after the recent defeat at Eupatoria (Feb. 17), which had broken the Czar's heart, had been too deeply wounded. Count Nesselrode, nevertheless, only a few days after the accession of Alexander II. had laid stress on the youthful monarch's love for peace, and shortly afterwards declared his readiness to recognise as preliminaries the four points on which the Western Powers had agreed with Austria. Conferences were now reopened in Vienna. Lord Palmerston eagerly seized the opportunity to get rid for a while of his inconvenient colleague, Lord John Russell, and give him the responsibility of these diplomatic negotiations. Thus the Reform Minister gained time to meditate at a distance from London on the blunders he had committed during the last few months. Unexperienced, and without any proper knowledge of either French or German, Lord John was quite ready to commit new blunders at Vienna, and thereby make himself impossible in Parliament. Palmerston could wish for nothing better for his own interests.

No sooner had Napoleon learned that an English Cabinet Minister was to go to Vienna, than he sent thither also his own Minister of Foreign Affairs, M. Drouyn de Lhuys, while Prince Gortschakoff, who had already been designated as Nesselrode's successor, represented Russia at the Conference. The first two points—the cessation of the Russian protectorate over Moldavia and Wallachia, and the regulation of the navigation of the Danube in conformity with the resolutions of the Congress of Vienna—presented little difficulty. On the other hand, a lively word combat, and a not less lively interchange of despatches, arose over the third point, which demanded the revision of the Dardanelles treaty of July 13, 1841, and the

abrogation of Russian supremacy in the Black Sea. The words, 'mettre fin à la prépondérance russe dans la Mer Noire,' were of a very elastic nature, and capable of various interpretations. The Western Powers, mindful of Sinope, demanded the neutralisation of the Black Sea and a limitation of the number of Russian and Turkish war ships. Gortschakoff declared that Sebastopol was not yet taken and probably never would be taken, and that Russia must reject any attempt to limit her naval forces as a humiliation unworthy of a great Power. Austria then proposed a compromise—that Russia should pledge herself to maintain the *status quo* of 1853; and that each of the Western Powers should be entitled to station two frigates in the Black Sea, in order to see that Russia did not increase her fleet. At the same time Austria promised to consider it as a *casus belli* if Russia kept there a single ship of war more than in 1853. M. Drouyn de Lhuys, who, in the interest of exhausted France, was anxious to bring the war to an end, accepted this proposed compromise, and induced Lord John Russell to do likewise. Both were disavowed. Drouyn de Lhuys sent in his resignation, and was succeeded at the Ministry on the Quai d'Orsay by Walewski; but Lord John Russell, scorned alike by his friends and foes, returned to London, and in spite of all remained minister for the present.

Judging these proceedings by the light of present events, it is impossible not to see that the Austrian Cabinet, like the two disavowed ministers of England and France, were in the main correct. It is impolitic to load a beaten enemy with humiliations, from which that enemy must necessarily strive to free himself when the first opportunity occurs. The result has shown that Russia found such an opportunity in the Franco-German War of 1870–71. Anyone, however, who

puts himself in the then position of the Western Powers, will understand that they should have declined to see the guarantee of a lasting peace—the means 'de mettre fin à la prépondérance russe dans la Mer Noire'—in the establishment of the *status quo*. He will understand, further, that neither England nor France should care to undertake the burden of being forced to maintain ships of war in the Black Sea simply to exercise a kind of police *espionnage* against the Russians. Lastly, the eventual consent of Austria to regard as a *casus belli* any increase of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea beyond the number afloat in 1853 was worthless, since what was desired was a *permanent* state of peace, not an ever smouldering war. Apart from that, the December treaty had become a dead letter from the inability of England and France to guarantee to the Austrian Government the support in money and troops contemplated by Article III. Austria had compelled the evacuation of the Danubian Principalities without drawing the sword, and recovered a wholly lost basis of peace. She was still ready, though rightly reluctant, to take an active part in hostilities. How could she be expected to begin another war after having replaced her army on a peace footing? In fact it was premature to think of building golden bridges for Russia, for she was not yet beaten, or at any rate did not consider herself beaten. Thus the war broke out afresh, and the expedition planned by Prince Albert against Kertch (May 27) resulted in the capture of most important stores from the Russians, which proved useful to the Allies.

The state of things in Paris was serious in the extreme. Every day was adding to the discontent excited by the war, which Napoleon, as it was then endeavoured to persuade the French, was carrying on solely in the interests of England. This made the adventurer of Strasburg and Boulogne think

of going in person to the Crimea, to put an end to the miserable business by a brilliant victory. The absurdity of the idea was patent. The army itself, who considered the Emperor no soldier, far less a commander, protested against it. A disaster, or even only a prolonged absence of the Emperor from Paris, might jeopardise his throne and the alliance with England, who, moreover, would never have consented to place her troops under the supreme command of the French monarch. Lord Palmerston seized the bull by the horns. He caused Lord Clarendon to go to Boulogne, to dissuade the Emperor from the project. Clarendon met among those around Napoleon with the warmest support; and, although the Emperor apparently persisted in his idea, that idea might be regarded as abandoned. The matter finally ended in a change of the French Commander-in-Chief. The energetic and resolute Marshal Pélissier superseded the brave but indecisive Canrobert.

Lord Clarendon discussed in Boulogne at the same time the necessary arrangements for the visit which the Emperor and Empress had contemplated paying to the Queen. At noon on April 16 the French guests arrived in a dense fog at Dover, where they were received by Prince Albert and conducted through London to Windsor. I had never seen such crowds in the streets of the metropolis before. From the windows of the Travellers' Club I had a good view of the procession as it turned into Pall Mall. The cheers of the populace evidently pleased the silent monarch, while the beauty of the Empress made the crowd enthusiastic. In passing King Street, the Emperor drew the attention of the Prince and Empress to the house he had occupied when in exile. The extracts from Queen Victoria's diary, published by Sir Theodore Martin in his 'Life of the Prince Consort,' dwell, how-

ever, so fully on this visit, that there is little to add to them.

On April 19 the Emperor and Empress went to Guildhall, in response to an invitation from the Lord Mayor. As London swarmed with French and Italian refugees, some anxiety was felt, notwithstanding the thoroughly hospitable feeling of the masses. Sir Richard Mayne, the Chief Commissioner of Police, told me that on the day before, the 18th, he had sent, at Lord Palmerston's direction, for Mazzini, Kossuth, and other prominent foreign refugees, and told them that Lord Palmerston would immediately bring in an Alien Bill and expel from the country all political refugees, without exception, within twenty-four hours, if the least annoyance were given to the Queen's guest during his stay in England. This warning produced the desired effect. So incensed was the mob against the refugees, that a perfectly innocent young man, in whose pockets somebody in the crowd had found a pistol, would have been torn to pieces at Temple Bar but for the protection of the police. The journey from Buckingham Palace to Guildhall was made, however, in a close carriage and at as quick a pace as the Queen's cream-coloured horses were able to proceed. The Horse Guards, who formed the escort, surrounded the vehicle. It looked as if a State prisoner were being taken to the Tower, not the guest of England to the palace of the chief civic magistrate.

The diplomatic body had been invited to this *déjeuner*. We were all assembled under the protection of Gog and Magog, the ancient colossal statues of Guildhall, when the cheers of the crowd announced the arrival of the Imperial pair. The grand hall presented an extraordinary sight. One might have fancied oneself at a masquerade, or transported back to the time of the virgin queen Elizabeth.

The aldermen with their long robes and gold chains, the Lord Mayor in his fur-trimmed gown and surrounded by his officials in fine livery, recalled the days of Shakespeare and Bacon. The strange mixture of sturdy independence and petty adherence to ancient formalities, of overweening national pride and obsequious flunkeyism, which characterises the London cockney, was conspicuous all around. On a daïs stood the throne of the Emperor, who, conducted by the Lord Mayor, slowly ascended the steps, took his seat, and then received from the hands of Walewski—I was about to say, the Speech from the Throne. He read it, in reply to the somewhat servile address, in a distinct voice, but not without a foreign accent. After that, they adjourned to the luncheon.

A short speech by the Lord Mayor, who proposed the Emperor's health, was responded to by the latter in brief but cordial terms. The inevitable loving cup was then passed round, and amused the Empress exceedingly. The Lord Mayor, also, did not forget to eulogise the very old sherry from the 'Napoleon butt,' which was drunk in honour of the Emperor.

As we were waiting after this entertainment for our carriages, I happened to have been pushed by the crowd so near to the Emperor's carriage that I could not help observing the nervous manner in which both Napoleon and Walewski eyed the crowd.

An hour afterwards, the Emperor and Empress received us at the French Embassy in Albert Gate House, where the whole of the diplomatic body was assembled. The ceremony was purely formal, but the Emperor appeared visibly pleased at having got safe and sound out of the City.

Besides councils of war and reviews, and balls and dinners in the Waterloo Room, an incident then occurred at Windsor which was destined to have the happiest results for Napoleon.

The cordial reception he had found at the English Court encouraged him so far as to confide to the Queen the sorrow he felt at the Empress's being childless. He begged her Majesty, as the mother of eight children, to persuade the Empress to consult a physician. Sir Charles Locock, the Queen's physician and accoucheur, was accordingly summoned; and so successful was the treatment he prescribed, that nine months afterwards the Prince Imperial was born. It is easy to understand from this incident the interest taken by the Queen in the young Prince until his tragic death.

Meanwhile the feeling of the country had sensibly changed. The peace party, which in the House of Commons consisted previously of only Bright and Cobden, already numbered many influential adherents. Disraeli himself, who for personal if for no other reasons had been averse to the war, foreseeing that it would keep his opponents in power, now came forward, though not yet openly in Parliament, as an advocate of peace.

I also had an opportunity at that time of giving some impetus to the agitation in favour of peace. Mr. Tracey Turnerelli, the son of an Italian sculptor, who had been naturalised in England, had given me some English lessons in St. Petersburg. Formerly a professor at the University of Kasan, Turnerelli had been summoned to St. Petersburg, and had received there a lucrative appointment at the Military Academy, which was under the control of the Grand Duke Constantine. The war surprised him in London, where he was then on leave, and compelled him, as an English subject, to remain there. Hostilities being protracted, the poor man had exhausted his means, and complained to me of his necessitous condition. He was not without talent, and had published several books in English about Kasan and

Russia, which met with success. This induced me to advise him to give lectures in some of the provincial towns, and combat the prejudice against 'Russian barbarism,' which had been fostered by the newspapers. I gave him some letters of recommendation to Bright and Cobden, who were quite willing to send Turnerelli into the country as an apostle of peace. His lectures excited interest, and brought him in more than he had expected. After peace was concluded, he visited me again, and told me that they had gained him the affections of a young lady, who, a Roman Catholic like himself, had offered him her hand and fortune. Thus he could live, as he said, a happy married man, with an income of several thousand pounds, at his house—at Brighton, and easily get over the loss of his professorship in Russia.

That the peace party should ultimately be strengthened by the Peelites, that Gladstone and Sir James Graham, both of whom were responsible for the declaration of war, should now make common cause with Cobden and Bright, was a circumstance which could be surprising only to those who still cherished illusions regarding these gentlemen's want of principle. Their political creed resolved itself into this—to follow the opinion of the day, and when in office only to ask themselves, 'What shall we do to keep there?' and when in opposition, 'What shall we do to get into it again?' Certainly they deceived themselves often enough about the real opinion of the country. The ascendency of Lord Palmerston was due to his rare instinct and his knowledge of the national peculiarities.

Towards the end of the Session, Lord John Russell had once more become impossible. The confessions he was forced to make on July 6 placed it beyond doubt that he had agreed, with the fullest conviction, to the compromise proposed by

Austria in Vienna. His continuance in the Cabinet which rejected that proposal and resolved to prosecute the war induced the Opposition to give notice of a vote of want of confidence. This vote, thanks to the Peelites and the adherents of the Manchester school, had every prospect of being carried. Lord John Russell only saved the Ministry by resigning on July 16.

At the scene of war, the Russians on June 18 had successfully repulsed an assault against Sebastopol which had been planned by the French, and only reluctantly acquiesced in by Lord Raglan. The latter died of vexation at this unmerited failure, on June 28. On the other hand, the Russians suffered on the Tchernaya in August a sensible defeat, which served to reveal the extent of their exhaustion. Everyone felt when Parliament was prorogued on August 14, that the fall of Sebastopol and the conclusion of peace were simply questions of time.

With regard to the return visit which Queen Victoria, accompanied by Prince Albert and the Princess Royal, paid to the French Court in the latter half of August, I learned nothing beyond what was reported in the newspapers, having left London shortly after their Majesties' return, in order to go to Portugal and Spain.

King Dom Pedro V. had attained his majority, and was about to assume the direction of the Government. King John was anxious not to omit offering his congratulations to this the first Duke of Saxony who had ascended the throne of Portugal. I received instructions, therefore, to repair to Lisbon on an extraordinary mission for that purpose. On my return I chose the route through Spain, and visited Cadiz and Seville, as well as Gibraltar and the points on the southern coast. On reaching Paris *viâ* Marseilles, I had not seen any

newspapers for weeks. I hastened to the Countess Walewska, who had already taken up her quarters at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the Quai d'Orsay. She invited me the same evening to dinner, adding that I should assist her by doing the honours to three foreign ministers. She named Herr von Beust, Herr von der Pfordten, and Count Vilain XIV. I thus accidentally learnt of my chief's presence in Paris. He had come with Pfordten, on the excuse of seeing the Exhibition, to preach peace to the French Emperor. 'Ils sont venus,' said Walewski that evening confidentially, 'enfoncer une porte ouverte. Sébastopol est pris, notre honneur militaire est sauf, et nous ne demandons pas mieux que de faire la paix, mais ça ne dépend pas uniquement de nous. Il faut d'abord que les Russes entendent raison.'

CHAPTER VI.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.—1855.

London, Jan. 15: Interview with Lord Clarendon—The Anglo-French Alliance—Sufferings of the English Army—Defects of the System—Threatening Aspect of Affairs in England.—London, April 23: Visit of the French Emperor and Empress to London.—London, May 19: Conversation with Count Colloredo on Austria's Policy in the Eastern Question—Neutrality of Germany—Herr von Usedom—The Peace Question a Shuttlecock of English Parties—The Janus-headed Ministry in England—Motions of Lord Grey and Milner Gibson—Sir Hamilton Seymour counsels Moderation.—London, July 16: Austrian Proposals of Mediation, and their Rejection by the Western Powers—Policy of Despair—Dangers of that Policy—German Unity alone can command Peace.—London, July 31: A *Déjeuner* of Friends of Peace—Disraeli and Bright on the Situation.

London: Jan. 15, 1855.

THE daily more intimate relations between Austria and France are beginning to cause some anxiety to English statesmen, who fear a reaction of this *rapprochement* on the present crisis in England. Any circumstance, however slight, deserves attention which might affect the delicate machinery of the Anglo-French alliance, that has cost some trouble to put in motion. Doubtless as it is that the two Powers have derived, and are still deriving, too great advantage from their alliance not to adhere to it, it is equally plain that blunders and weaknesses exist on both sides, and that each party is therefore anxious to prevent its cards from being seen by the other. While Clarendon this morning spoke with a certain disparagement of the French, who had now what they

deserved to have, an iron dictator, he paid an almost reluctant homage to the talents of Napoleon III. as a ruler, who—a statesman of consummate ability—governed after the Whig maxim of 'Everything for, and nothing through, the people.' But all these utterances betray a certain aristocratic ill-humour, and the dark presentiment that the Ministry, thus divided against itself, will not be in a position to offer to the master will on the Seine an opposition worthy of the dignity of old England. No doubt can be entertained that Lord Palmerston has failed in the object of his journey to Paris. He had gone thither to gain over the French Emperor to a revolutionary, and especially an anti-Austrian, policy, and has returned converted. On the other hand, it is equally certain that Lord John Russell is just now busily engaged in privately recommending to Napoleon's approval his ideas of a pure Whig Cabinet, in which Lord Palmerston should allow Lord John Russell to be Premier, and consent to serve under him as Minister of War. Clarendon would then remain Foreign Secretary, Molesworth would go to the Colonial, and Sir George Grey to the Home, Office, and Gladstone, perhaps, would be Chancellor of the Exchequer. Thus matters stand to-day. Russell's return from Paris is awaited with as great eagerness as the news from Vienna. For should the negotiations there offer, as can hardly be expected, a prospect of success, nothing more would be heard for some time of this embryonic Whig Cabinet.

The *fiasco* of the English expedition to the Crimea can hardly be welcomed in St. Petersburg with more malicious pleasure than in Paris. Flattering, indeed, to Frenchmen are the eulogies showered by anti-Government newspapers in England on the French army and their admirable organisation. The notion of a future French invasion of England

would seem to be less fanciful since this expedition than it was before. The statements made by English officers who have come home are just suited to excite a panic on this side of the Channel, and greater arrogance on the other. It is said that the accounts given by Lord Cardigan of the deplorable condition of the English troops so deeply agitated one of his hearers, that he died suddenly from fright. I cannot vouch for the truth of this story, but at any rate it characterises the feeling here. One result of the separate command has been an excessive strain upon the English forces, who have hitherto lost about 15,000 men. While the heavy work in the trenches only falls to the share of the French every fourth or fifth night, the numerically weaker English have to perform it on an average every second night. Hence the almost daily surprises of the English outposts, who are constantly fallen upon and massacred in their sleep by the Russians before a signal of alarm can be given.

For all this, public opinion holds the Ministers personally responsible, though unfairly, as the 'Journal des Débats' has recently explained in two excellently written articles. It is not the persons, but the system that is to blame; and this will soon be recognised by everyone in England. The conviction is already gaining ground that the British Empire requires for her own safety an army at least twice as strong as the present one, and that such an army could be had without paying more for it. What the army now costs is incredible. The day of reckoning will be a heavy one. One or two instances will suffice to show the utter confusion prevailing in the War Department. News comes that the troops are in want of gloves. The Secretary of State for War, the Duke of Newcastle, immediately orders 40,000 pairs to be sent off. The Secretary at War, Sidney Herbert, hears nothing of this

order, and has 50,000 more pairs made ready. The 90,000 pairs of gloves arrive safe and are distributed, and it turns out that they are utterly useless. Lord Raglan begs urgently for winter clothing for his troops, as well as medicines and lint. A whole ship is laden with them, and actually enters Balaclava harbour, but returns again to England with her cargo because nobody has been found to receive it. These are incidents of daily occurrence, since no one knows who is cook or waiter. Thus hundreds of thousands are squandered, and the army is perishing of cold and hunger.

Universal conscription would not only provide a numerically stronger army, but abolish the unnecessary luxury which is now demoralising the troops raised by a system of recruitment. But the introduction of universal conscription is impossible without a radical change in the State such as would put all existing institutions on their trial. If British individualism were destroyed by the conscription, how long would the aristocracy, the ultimate type of that individualism, remain? In this land of liberty, an army based on universal service would necessarily have a democratic character, and differ essentially from the present aristocratic one, based on a system of enlistment. Whom would it obey—the Parliament or the Throne? After the death of Cromwell, the creator of the first democratic army possessed by England, this very question did actually arise. Monk solved it then, just as we have seen Napoleon solve it now. If the present Queen's successors are as wise as she is, a similar solution might again occur.

London: April 23, 1855.

In my official despatches I have purposely abstained from describing in detail the impression produced here by the Emperor and Empress of the French. I take this opportunity of supplying the omission in a private letter.

It is well known that Lord Aberdeen hesitated for a long time to yield to Napoleon's urgent request for a personal interview with the Queen. He had good reason for fearing that the only result would be a mutual cooling of the personal relations which had been established with some difficulty. The triumph, therefore, gained by tact and personal amiability over a prejudice not entirely unjustifiable, is all the more deserving of praise. The path had been in a measure smoothed by the meeting at Boulogne, but the independent character of the judgment prevailing here in the highest quarters did not serve to allay the Prime Minister's fears. The line between Emperor and *parvenu* was drawn, from all I hear, with singular skill. Without in any way lowering himself, the exalted guest, not without ostentation, displayed the most profound deference to the historical claims of the Queen; and the modesty with which he either ignored the popular ovations, or received them as attentions to the Court, was justly appreciated. He exhibited the most genuine cordiality and simplicity, and avoided any attempt to force a premature intimacy. A certain timidity and shyness on his part must have been the more agreeable surprise, as *brusque* manners had been expected, and a dictatorial bearing. In a word, 'on a été dans ses petits souliers et on a fait pattes de velours.'

The Empress made a particularly pleasing impression in her tasteful attire and with her dazzling white complexion, so striking in a Spanish lady. She looks wonderfully young, and might be taken for eighteen rather than for twenty-eight. There is a spontaneous grace in her movements notwithstanding the uneasy, not to say unnatural, expression of her *Mater dolorosa* eyes. Her childish simplicity has made her most attractive, and the Princess Royal, a girl of fifteen,

was particularly enthusiastic about her beautiful Imperial friend, whose departure cost her bitter tears. Eugénie won the Queen's heart by her amiable ways with the children, and by her longing for similar blessings, which appear to be denied her.

At the Chapter of the Order of the Garter preceding the first council of war, the question was mooted whether the newly elected Knight would take the customary oath of allegiance to the order. 'Not only to the Order,' was the Emperor's reply, 'but to the Sovereign who bestowed it upon me, and that for now and ever (*pour tout jamais*).' Such demonstrations have fallen here upon a grateful soil, and insured the prospect of attaining the object in view—*solidarité* during the present war.

For all that, however, Napoleon tries to throw on the English Government the whole blame that peace is not yet concluded. I have been assured that, in private letters to three influential personages in Paris, he has expressed this opinion in words to the following effect: 'J'avais cru que ce bon Drouyn de Lhuys s'était trompé en affirmant que les Anglais étaient si belliqueux. J'ai voulu voir par moi-même, et malheureusement, ce bon Drouyn de Lhuys a raison. Il n'y a rien à faire, on n'est pas allié pour rien, et il faut bien faire ce dont les Anglais, qui ont le diable au corps, ne veulent pas démordre,' &c. The poor English! They are to blame for everything!

The new French Minister of Marine was appointed by a decree dated Windsor, April 19, 1855. Napoleon I. signed the 'Règlement des Sociétaires du Théâtre français' in Moscow, but he never came to Windsor, and received no Address from his 'bonne ville de Londres.'

London: May 19, 1855.

From the highly cautious utterances of my Austrian colleague, I could only gather that his Cabinet are doing their utmost, despite the unfavourable character of existing relations, to keep the threads of the negotiations unbroken, and seem determined to prevent a mutual rupture. The engagement made with the Western Powers in the treaty of last December, appears too binding to allow Austria to adopt the policy of absolute neutrality which is strictly adhered to by us in Saxony. The *solidarité* of the four Points, observed Count Colloredo, must be taken as an admitted necessity, not only in a formal but in a material sense. The third Point had been included in the programme, not merely because the four Points formed in their entirety the basis of the December treaty, but because in the limitation of Russia's naval power in the Black Sea, Austria had to look for the only real and substantial guarantee for the concessions obtained in regard to the first two Points. The difficulty was to agree as to the means of putting this limitation in an acceptable form. England and France would only abstain from demolishing Sebastopol if a limitation were guaranteed to them which would render that fortress harmless for aggressive purposes. Pains were taken on the part of Austria to show that it was quite enough to obtain from Russia a recognition of the principle of limitation. But it was not a mere question whether Russia is to maintain four or twenty ships in the Black Sea. It was necessary to convince the Cabinet at St. Petersburg that the unlimited increase of her offensive power in the *mare clausum* would render impossible a reasonable settlement of the Eastern Question, a quieting of mutual jealousies and the establishment of that 'honourable and lasting peace' which

was desired on all sides. To my objection, that the proposed limitation would remain illusory, Colloredo replied that treaties were concluded with the presumed intention of observing them. The only *compelle* that existed in the law of nations, was to make the breach of such treaties a case of war.

As to the rest, the Count did not deny that there was a certain line beyond which Austria would in no case follow the Western Powers; and, in fact, the latter have already withdrawn, at the urgent instance of the Austrian Cabinet, their demands for the demolition of Sebastopol, and an alteration of existing territorial boundaries.

Colloredo spoke to me not without satisfaction of the conduct of Walewski during his last three days' visit in London. Important negotiations extending over several years, as well as the experience he had gathered here, had agreeably matured, he said, the new French Minister, and obliterated many traces of a dilettantism which was not devoid of danger. He had learned to restrict his desires to possibilities, to subordinate personal sympathies and sanguine wishes to statesmanlike reflection, and seemed honestly anxious to promote actively the work of peace. The fear that Count Walewski would bring his special predilections to bear on his treatment of the Polish question, was unfounded. During the Vienna Congress, perhaps another solution might have been feasible and desirable. But now everything had become so entangled that it was quite impossible to see how the question could be dealt with at all. How many a man would not prefer to keep a crooked arm, than run the risk of breaking it again and possibly having it mortify? According to Colloredo, the negotiations on the third Point appeared still to be hanging fire. To conclude from the speeches made in Parliament by Palmer-

ston and Clarendon, it was the duty of England and France to treat the Austrian Cabinet with the utmost consideration.

Rumour speaks of an actual ultimatum having been sent, or being about to be sent, by Austria to St. Petersburg; but there would seem to be no foundation for the report. No doubt Count Valentin Esterházy has been endeavouring to smoothe the way with the Russian Government for future proposals of his Court; but Vienna, at any rate, will abstain from making any formal demand, until at least a common basis is found both here and in Paris for the settlement of the third Point.

The unpleasant rebuff experienced by Austria in the rejection by France and England of her last proposal of mediation affords her ample reason for exercising the greatest reserve in seeking a new basis of negotiation. Even if, therefore, negotiations here on that subject are still pending, it will be scarcely possible to gather any certain information until some actual result has been arrived at. The impatience of the public and the unwarrantable indiscretion of the press are sufficient reasons for observing the strictest reticence.

The leading article of the 'Times' which I inclose shows that people here are gradually accustoming themselves to regard the neutrality of Germany as a *fait accompli*.

The negotiations with Prussia are completely broken off. Herr von Usedom, who has been looked on for several weeks as 'used up,' is thinking of leaving England to-morrow altogether.

The crisis here in home politics still continues, and many think that the days of Palmerston's Ministry are numbered. In any case it is a noteworthy symptom of the decline from which the English body politic is suffering, that the foreign war, instead of moderating party strife at home, only serves to sharpen it, and that the question of peace, which has become

a shuttlecock of faction, receives a different answer every day. Thus the true interests of the country are lost sight of, and the continuance of the war serves only as a means for acquiring or retaining power. The boasted wisdom of Parliament would furnish food for ridicule if another feeling did not preponderate. The curse of mediocrity weighs on the leaders of all parties. The dead forms of an antiquated and painfully pedantic routine are crushing out all life and spirit, and scantily conceal the ever-growing atrophy of the State. One looks in vain for fresh energies, in vain for men who have not yet been stricken more or less with the *marasmus senilis*. This very want of great characters serves to strengthen the suspicion that England has already overpassed the zenith of her greatness, and is now condemned to live only on the memories of past renown—on the capital, not the interest, of the precious legacy bequeathed by stronger generations. The feeling of despondency is universal, and seems to offer no hope of improvement. This is seen very plainly when discussing the present situation with leading politicians. Wherever I broached the subject, I found an incredible ignorance of facts. Of the friends of peace here, Lord Grey and Mr. Gladstone alone seem to have actually read the Vienna protocols. The rest were extremely astonished when I pointed out to them that the Russian concessions were at any rate comprehensive enough to deserve consideration. They admitted this, and added that personally they wished for nothing but the restoration of peace; but as for voting for Lord Grey or Mr. Gibson, they could not, they said, be expected to do that, for it would make them too unpopular. Both might be perfectly right, but nobody believed them to be so. The country desired peace, and the Government also, but the Emperor Napoleon did not, and so the war, of course, must be continued,

since it would be impossible to quarrel with a monarch who had done so much for England. On my asking what, then, he had really done for England, I failed to get an answer. But that Englishmen should confess to a stranger without a blush this dependence on the French ruler, is a characteristic sign of the time.

Still more characteristic is the fact that Napoleon, on the other hand, pointedly refers to the war fever of the English in order to quiet the peace party in France, which is growing more powerful every day. *Qui trompe-t-on ici?*

The English Ministry has the face of a Janus. In the eyes of the press and the Radical stump orators, they would like to figure as a Cabinet which had caused the fall of M. Drouyn de Lhuys, and compelled the French to continue the war. In diplomatic circles, on the contrary, their first wish is to show how willingly they would have accepted Austria's proposal of mediation had not Napoleon been so decidedly opposed to it.

Under these circumstances it is scarcely possible to expect anything of advantage for the cause of peace from Mr. Gibson's motion; just as little as from that of Lord Grey, the discussion of which has been postponed till the debate in the Commons is concluded. This debate might form a turning point in the history of England, if only the national policy were guided by a Parliament animated by pure patriotism, and capable of rising above the currents of the hour, instead of by an anonymous daily press. That Gladstone and Sir James Graham should declare their readiness to support Milner Gibson, is full of significance. I dined yesterday in the company of Gladstone with the Queen, and he made no secret to me of his views. 'You understand,' he said, among other things, 'that nothing but the conviction

that I am discharging a sacred duty, reconciles me to undertaking the very grave responsibility of supporting Gibson's motion. I do so because, in my opinion, the concessions promised by Russia contain sufficient guarantees. Those very concessions will tear to pieces all the ancient treaties which gave an excuse to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg for interfering in the internal affairs of Turkey.' I naturally did my best to strengthen Gladstone in this conviction, and endeavoured to show him that even a second edition of the Peace of Amiens would be in the interest of England. For if Russia were really striving to take Constantinople, she might well be content with the results of the last two years. The continuance of hostilities must only weaken Turkey more and more, while England had already given practical proof that she was not yet sufficiently prepared for a general war. If, therefore, under circumstances so unfavourable to the British Empire as the present, the peace to be striven for were in reality nothing more than an armistice, it would still give an undeniable opportunity of gaining time for adequate preparation.

As regards the Tories, their attitude in Monday's debate will still possess some interest, although they will no more openly support Gibson's motion than that of Layard. In point of principle, however, they are so far in accord with Gibson and the Peelites, as to maintain that there was no reason for breaking off negotiations when once the basis of the four Points had been accepted. Some leaders of the Conservative party go further, by plainly stating that the Russian proposals afford a more practical basis for a lasting peace than those of the Western Powers. If the Tories, nevertheless, decline to vote with Gibson, the main reason will be that they repudiate the interference of Parliament in

diplomatic negotiations, and concede to it simply the right of censuring by a vote of want of confidence the Ministerial policy as a whole.

A vote of this kind, indeed, the Opposition seem determined to bring forward immediately after the Whitsuntide recess. In this respect the leading article of to-day's 'Press' deserves attention.[1]

P.S.—Sir Hamilton Seymour is striving zealously to counsel moderation. He preaches to the Ministers daily: If you can wrest provinces from Russia and employ them as objects of negotiation, do so. If you cannot, make peace, but not a peace humiliating to Russia. I know that country too well not to know that a peace of that sort would be tantamount to a permanent state of war.

London: July 16, 1855.

Since the rejection of the compromise proposed by Austria, the war between the Western Powers and Russia has entered upon an entirely new phase, the importance of which will be more palpable every day.

Lord John Russell's confessions in Parliament on July 6, in direct contradiction to the warlike speech he made some

[1] Milner Gibson had given notice of an Address to the Crown, expressing regret that the opportunity offered by the Vienna Conferences for bringing the negotiations to a pacific issue had not been improved, and asserting that the interpretation of the third Point conceded by Russia furnished the elements of renewed Conferences, and a good basis for a just and satisfactory peace. When this motion was about to be debated in the House of Commons on May 21, the Peelites induced the mover to postpone it. On July 6 the question again cropped up, and caused Sir E. Bulwer Lytton to give notice, in the name of the Conservative party, of a formal vote of want of confidence (July 10), which was withdrawn, however, in consequence of John Russell's resignation (July 13). Compare Sir Theodore Martin's *Life of his Royal Highness the Prince Consort* (London, 1877), vol. iii. pp. 281 sqq. and pp. 305 sqq.; and *Memoirs of an ex-Minister*, by the Earl of Malmesbury (London, 1884), vol. ii. pp. 29 seq.

weeks ago, after his return from Vienna, and the documents published in No. 15 of 'Eastern Papers,' have thrown awkward side-lights, not only on the past, but also on the present and future policy of England and France. A glance at the circumstances under which this change of front was ultimately effected in Paris will complete the picture.

As is well known, the French Cabinet at first decided to accept the Austrian proposals, and Walewski was instructed to recommend their acceptance also to the Government in England. Then came the news of the failure of the assault on the Redan (June 18), and the Emperor Napoleon changed his mind and ordered M. Drouyn de Lhuys to instruct Walewski accordingly. In vain did the French Foreign Minister use every effort to dissuade his Emperor from this move. As all his protests failed, he carried out his new instructions, but resigned, and left Paris without seeing the Emperor again, avoiding a proffered audience as being objectless. Such, at least, is the story current here in well-informed quarters. At any rate, thus much is certain, that Drouyn de Lhuys, Persigny, and Bourqueney, and Walewski also—as Sir Cornewall Lewis yesterday assured me—were unanimous in thinking that the Russian instructions on the first two Points, taken in conjunction with the Austrian proposals on the third Point, contained, theoretically speaking, a complete solution of the Eastern Question. In England, this opinion is shared by all who are conspicuous for their statesmanlike judgment of European affairs. Palmerston and Clarendon, however, have not the courage to follow this their better conviction. Should the Western Powers, therefore, incur the responsibility of having prevented the restoration of peace by rejecting a suitable compromise, a totally new duty will devolve on Austria and Germany—a duty which

does not consist of merely ruminating wasted proposals and empty phrases.

Whether the war could have been prevented, or, at least, ended long ago, had Austria from the first been cordially supported by Germany, or whether Austria has been secured by the passive tenacity of her partners in the Bund from the dangers attending a war of unprovoked aggression, is now a question too late for dispute. The *hic Rhodus hic salta*! holds good to-day more than ever. Unless all signs are fallacious, the policy of England and France is entering more and more on the stage of despair. It is true that Lord Palmerston on July 6 repudiated all idea of unchaining the Revolution in Hungary and Poland. Napoleon himself makes no secret of the dangers which a championship of so-called oppressed nationalities would entail on his own throne. And yet this policy of despair passes all comprehension. A few more defeats like that of June 18, and the allied armies in the Crimea would have to think of retiring to their ships. They might have done this, perhaps, when they had only 50,000 men left standing on that blood-stained soil, and possibly they are now regretting that they did not follow Lord Raglan's advice shortly after the battle of the Alma. But no such voluntary retirement can be dreamed of with an army of 200,000 men, to say nothing of the reinforcements which Napoleon, alarmed at the Russian movements *en masse*, is sending out every day. The more, however, he denudes France of troops, the less able will he be to resist any hints in favour of a revolutionary diversion. Now, it is well known that England has been secretly endeavouring for months to disturb the intimacy hitherto existing between France and Austria. Is it possible that Napoleon, by his rejection of the Austrian proposals, has fallen into a trap

prepared for him by Lord Palmerston? Moreover, people here are not without their fears for India and British prestige in Asia, for everyone must own that the Anglo-French alliance would never survive an actual overthrow in the Crimea. Should the present crisis produce a revolutionary war Ministry, that Ministry would in all probability hasten to play out its first cards in Italy and then in Sicily. If Palmerston secures the majority, by seriously threatening a dissolution of Parliament, he is, since the retirement of his only rival Lord John Russell, virtually dictator. Little energy as the feeble old Premier may have shown in the conduct of the regular war, he would not be wanting in the sinister ability to kindle a general conflagration with the aid of the party of Revolution, especially if he should see therein the means of regaining his lost popularity. Already the compilation of the last Blue-book points to hostile designs against Austria. One is accustomed, indeed, to the publication of private conversations, but the latest indiscretions surpass anything that has previously occurred, and will serve, it is to be hoped, as a warning for the future. It is significant also that a ministerial paper, the 'Globe,' should venture to announce that the Sardinian Government have represented here and in Paris that Upper Italy, if freed from the 'yoke' of Austria, could put 30,000 instead of 15,000 men in line in the Crimea, to further the 'sacred cause of civilisation.'

Under these circumstances, the question must force itse on every German patriot who watches the gathering storm, whether it is not high time to anticipate the threatening revolution by means of vigorous and concentrated action. Should it not, then, be possible to make use of the materials for peace acquired in Vienna to effect an understanding

between Austria, Germany, and Russia, before the die is finally cast in the Crimea? And if this were done, would it not then be the time to remind Napoleon that United Germany is strong enough to command peace, and would not hesitate, for that object, to begin a third time, if necessary, the well-known march on Paris? Would not such a demonstration of unity spare much blood? If people in Paris dread one thing more than another, it is a war with Germany. The bare threat of it would suffice. France cannot afford at this moment to come to a rupture. Suppose, even, that France were to take up the challenge, still a regular war would appear a smaller evil in comparison with a general conflagration fanned by Palmerston in concert with Napoleon, a conflagration which could not fail to imperil every institution on the Continent. But if the union of all Germany is the *sine quâ non* condition of the restoration of a lasting peace, it is immaterial on what foundation that union is laid. The statesmen of Austria would only be acting in their own well-understood interests, if to-day they recommended a demonstration of all Germany against the West with the same arguments that they employed in previous years to recommend a demonstration against the East.

London: July 31, 1855.

A lady who has been a friend since her youth of the Princess Lieven makes, though married to a former English Cabinet Minister, so little secret of her Russian sympathies as to display on her arm daily the well-known mourning bracelet in memory of the Emperor Nicholas. She is, of course, utterly opposed to the present war, and yesterday invited several friends of peace to luncheon, among others Disraeli, Bright, the Prussian Minister, and myself.

John Bright, a cotton spinner of Manchester, lives in Quaker circles, which are difficult of access to us diplomatists. Our amiable hostess had had some trouble in decoying this Radical Quaker into her aristocratic house. Her object was to bring him into personal contact with Disraeli, and to enable Bernstorff and myself to make the acquaintance of this able orator and courageous apostle of peace. Mr. Bright was Bernstorff's neighbour at luncheon, and Disraeli mine. The latter was in the best possible humour, and more communicative than ever. He assured me at once that Gladstone's reconciliation with the Tories was an accomplished fact. 'Gladstone and Bright,' he remarked among other things, 'are not only the best speakers in the House of Commons, but also the most energetic characters there.'

'Present persons always excepted,' I broke in—a compliment which was accepted as quite a matter of course.

'Of course!' replied the leader of the Opposition; 'I have always thought Gladstone, Bright, and myself the three most energetic men in the House. I have watched Gladstone very carefully,' he added, 'and am convinced that his strength of will is inflexible. Bright is sometimes blunt, but his eloquence is most powerful. He has not the subtleness of Cobden, but he has far more energy, and his talents are more practically applied. The session is at an end. Old Palmerston has taken the hint we gave him recently, and shook my hand yesterday so warmly that I am disarmed until November. When that time comes, the position will have become clearer, and public opinion shaped itself; and we shall then see what is to be done. Thus much I can say, that our Ministry is prepared: a strong Government, which will astonish the world. The men who are now at the helm, cannot wield it any longer. It will not be necessary to upset them, they will

fall by themselves. With the exception of old Palmerston, who for a man of seventy still displays astonishing energy, the present Cabinet has neither an orator nor a debater. But the old man is a desperado, who clings convulsively to power, because he feels that he would have no prospect of ever coming in again if he were now ousted.'

I then turned the conversation on the subject of the Austrian proposals, the rejection of which, even from the war party's point of view, was to be regarded as a political mistake. For even if, as Lord Clarendon believed, the peace thus obtained had only been an armistice, it would have enabled the Allies to effect an honourable retreat. It was sheer nonsense for the English newspapers to talk of the perfidy of Austria, for it was not Austria, but the Western Powers, who had torn up the treaty of December. 'England,' I said, 'has no money, and France no troops, to provide the support stipulated for in the third Article. And do you wonder that your ally should think twice before beginning single-handed a war compared to which the Crimean expedition would be mere child's play?'

Disraeli, who had followed attentively my remarks, agreed with me, and said, 'The truth is, we have no longer any statesmen. The whole business has been mismanaged from the first.'

The main points of this conversation have been reported on the whole with accuracy by the 'Press,' a newspaper which is said to be Disraeli's organ.

My question, whether Palmerston would not perhaps employ the vacation in reverting to his policy of 1848, to conceal his difficulties in the Crimea by means of revolutionary diversions, was answered evasively. The House of Commons would never follow the Premier in such a course, but Palmerston was a desperado and capable of anything.

Mr. Bright was even more outspoken. He said plainly, 'The war is being continued simply and solely to keep Lord Palmerston in office, for it is well known on the other side of the Channel that they would not have such an easy game with anyone else as with the present Premier.'

Altogether, and notwithstanding the undoubted *rapprochement* which is going on between the Tories, Peelites, and the Manchester school, it would be a mistake to assume that the war party has lost ground. But just as the sun lights up the glaciers before reaching the valley, so there is some comfort in the reflection that the light of truth is beginning to dawn on the leaders of the Opposition. The Government know this, and await with impatience the close of Parliament, to be able to take breath again.

CHAPTER VII.

LONDON.—1856.

Betrothal of the Princess Royal—Feeble Conduct of the War in the Crimea—Prospects of Peace—Persigny—Austrian Ultimatum—Russia's Acceptance of the Preliminaries—Peace Conference at Paris—Orloff's Services in the Cause of Peace—The Wensleydale Peerage—Prince Albert as a Builder—Birth of the Prince Imperial—The Duke of Cambridge made Commander-in-Chief.

During my absence, the betrothal of the Princess Royal with Prince Frederick William of Prussia had taken place quietly at Balmoral. The feeling against Prussia, which this occasion revived, turned anew against Prince Albert, who was absurdly accused of Russian sympathies.

Notwithstanding the fall of Sebastopol, the conduct of the war in the Crimea was extremely inefficient, since the division of the chief command between four armies failed to insure a vigorous prosecution of the advantage so dearly purchased. General Simpson, who had succeeded by seniority to the command of the English troops, rendered vacant by the death of Lord Raglan, but who soon afterwards resigned his post, was too old to transform into soldiers by a mere wave of his hand the raw recruits which had replaced the lost veterans. Pélissier, now Duke of Malakoff, was little liked owing to his rudeness of manner, and was anxious not to endanger the laurels he had won by his successful assault on the outwork of Sebastopol. Omer Pasha, an Austrian deserter and renegade, who commanded some forty or fifty thousand Turks, had failed to gain

the confidence either of the English or French. It was idle to think of entrusting to any of these three generals the supreme command of the united forces of the Allies. Nor had the brave General La Marmora, who commanded the Piedmontese contingent of about 12,000 men, any better chance of obtaining such a post. Thus then, for want of any plan, the utterly demoralised Russian army was left unmolested in the Crimea; nay, the Russians had even been allowed to take finally the fortress of Kars from the Turks (November 28, 1855), and thus obtain an object of negotiation.

In truth, everybody was sick of the war, and hailed with delight the prospects of peace which were opened up in Vienna.

Persigny, the trusted adviser of Napoleon, had succeeded Walewski in London, and was labouring sincerely, but with the simplicity of a novice in diplomacy, for the restoration of peace. He left no doubt as to the temporary exhaustion of France, who had suffered more severely than England, and went so far as to tell Lord Palmerston that his Emperor had no choice, he *must* conclude peace. If England wished to continue the war, she must do so alone.

Lord Palmerston feigned surprise, and assured the French Ambassador that England was not so foolish as to keep up large armies in times of peace, and knew very well from the outset that her first army would have to be sacrificed early in the war. But she was now prepared; there were 150,000 men under arms, including the Turks and the foreign legions, and she was now ready to begin the war in real earnest, and, if necessary, bring it single-handed to an end.

This attitude of the Prime Minister harmonised fully with the feeling of the country. It was not for nothing—for a mere hollow peace—that great sacrifices would ever have been

made. The war had cost England alone more than 20,000 men, and about eighty millions sterling. But though it was known that the losses of Russia had been far more serious, doubts were entertained of the sincerity of the Russian Government's desire for peace. Austria finally put an end to the uncertainty, by presenting an Ultimatum to Russia (Dec. 15) which had been concerted with France, and was afterwards agreed to by England, and threatening to break off diplomatic relations at once in case the demands of the Cabinets of Vienna, Paris, and London were not accepted as preliminaries of peace. This had its effect, and on January 16 Queen Victoria received the first news of their acceptance by a telegram from the King of Prussia. On February 24 the Peace Conference was opened in Paris. Lord Clarendon and Lord Cowley represented England; Walewski and Bourqueney, France; Buol and Hübner, Austria; and Orloff and Brunnow, Russia. Count Cavour reaped the reward for the assistance given to England and France in the Crimea, by representing Sardinia in the Council of the Great Powers; while Prussia, which had remained neutral, was at first excluded. The old German proverb, 'No aid, no advice' (*Die nicht mit thaten, nicht mit rathen*), was not, however, strictly carried out. After the terms of peace had been agreed on with Russia, the Prussian representatives received at the last hour an invitation to add their signature to the treaty.

Lord Clarendon confided to me that he had gone to Paris with express instructions from Lord Palmerston not to allow peace to be made. 'But we had reckoned without Napoleon,' he added. 'Not one of us can resist him when he tries to persuade us face to face in his own room.' I refer to this *naïve* avowal as a proof of the personal fascination which the French Emperor still exercised on English statesmen.

To Prince Orloff, however, even more than to Napoleon, belongs the merit of having brought this senseless war to an end. This trusted councillor of the Emperor Nicholas, accustomed to take a high view of things, disdained the petty tricks of Brunnow, and disarmed Clarendon's animosity by frankly confessing the errors committed by the late Czar; to wit, the choice of the irritable and incompetent Menschikoff, the occupation of the Danubian Principalities, and the battle of Sinope. He himself had never omitted to protest against each of those steps, and predicted to his Emperor what had actually occurred. The son had now to atone for the errors of the father. Russia was exhausted, and needed peace. If too hard terms were imposed, they would be accepted, but with a mental reservation to repudiate them at the first opportunity. This frank and honourable language did not fail to produce its impression, both on the Emperor Napoleon and on the representatives of England. Peace was signed on March 30, after Cavour had taken care to get the grievances of Italy mentioned in the protocol.

The English Parliament had patriotically supported the Ministry. Disraeli's resolute speech in the debate on the Address showed the Foreign Cabinets how unanimous was England in backing up her representatives. The Peace met with the most cordial approbation of both Houses, and the prosperous state of the revenue soon caused the wealthy country to forget the sacrifice of money occasioned by the war.

Amidst the excitement of foreign politics, a question of home interest occupied Parliament shortly after the opening of the Session, which, though in itself unimportant, served to bring into prominent relief the power and importance of the English aristocracy.

It had long been remarked that the House of Lords, in its capacity as the supreme appellate tribunal of the country, was insufficiently provided with members learned in the law. With a view to supply this evident defect, the Prince Consort proposed to create some life peerages, and bestow them on judges or barristers of eminence. Men of this class had already frequently declined an hereditary peerage, on the ground that they were too poor to gratify their eldest sons at the expense of the younger ones. The Government, without giving any opportunity for further discussion, now took action and nominated Sir James Parke, a distinguished lawyer and a man highly esteemed by all parties, as a life peer, under the title of Lord Wensleydale. As he had no children and was already an old man, it was, practically speaking, quite immaterial whether he was a life peer or an hereditary one. The Queen signed the letters patent, which were countersigned by Lord Palmerston as Prime Minister. But the admission of the new life peer to a seat in the House was at once contested, on the ground, in particular, that the Crown, which was practically the Ministers of the day, would be able by means of such peerages to swamp the Upper House. Lord Lyndhurst brought the question to an issue on February 7 by a motion to refer the Letters Patent to the Committee for Privileges. In the debate that followed Lord Derby took an active part. I was in the House, and remember the impression his speech made on all who heard it. He began by admitting that the Queen, as the fountain of honour, had the indisputable right to create either an hereditary or a life peer. The creation was a matter for the Crown. But the question whether the peer so created could sit and vote in the House, was a question for the House itself.

'I cannot remain silent,' said the noble Earl, 'as feeling a

deep interest in this question, and having myself the honour of being the fourteenth representative in this House of an hereditary earldom, which now for four hundred years has, in hereditary succession, sent representatives here—when I find that the privileges of the House are attacked by an exercise of the prerogative for which the faintest shadow of a precedent must be sought at a period antecedent to that at which the earliest of my ancestors had the honour of a seat here. . . . I will not consent without a struggle to see the House of Peers swamped. I will not consent that the Crown shall have the power of calling peers to this House by the mere exercise of the prerogative, or that we shall be denied the right of discussing and deliberating upon the manner in which the power of the Crown has been applied in the exercise of its prerogative. I will not consent that we should deprive ourselves by our own act of that which is essential to every legislative body—namely, the power of being the judges of our own privileges, and the interpreters of the laws which regulate the rights of those who have the honour of a seat in your Lordships' House.'

The records of the House were searched. No precedent was found since 1688. The House of Lords accordingly refused to admit Lord Wensleydale, and the Queen found herself compelled to cancel his Patent and issue another creating him an hereditary peer.

That real liberty can only thrive in a country where rights are so determinedly protected as in England, requires no proof.

Lord Clarendon also, who was reckoned one of the most liberal of the Liberals, gave about this time an evidence of his thoroughly aristocratic spirit. He requested the Queen to forbid, according to custom, Lord Cowley and himself to

accept the Grand Cross of the Legion of Honour, which the French Emperor had wished to bestow upon them. At the same time he declined with thanks the proffered Marquisate, on the ground that his means did not enable him to support suitably the higher dignity.

During his comparatively short lifetime, Prince Albert did some remarkable building. Osborne, in the Isle of Wight, is his work. In 1856 Balmoral, the favourite royal residence in the Scotch Highlands, was completed, as also the large ball and concert room in Buckingham Palace. This enormous hall, so imposing from its gigantic proportions, was opened on May 8, in celebration of the conclusion of peace, with a Court ball. The increasing wealth of the nation had already brought up the list of persons introduced at Court to a total of 8,000. The apartments existing at the accession of Queen Victoria were no longer large enough to contain the number of those who received invitations. That the Prince cared not only for the Court, but also for the people, by the creative energy with which he combated the tasteless and commonplace routine of Old England, is well known. The Crystal Palace at Sydenham, built out of the materials of the Exhibition of 1851, Victoria Park, the great Military Hospital at Chelsea, the South Kensington Museum, and the Royal Albert Hall, which was first opened some years after his death, owe their existence to his love of art and zeal for the popular welfare.

The illness of the French Empress at the birth of the Prince Imperial gave the Queen an opportunity of expressing her friendly feeling towards the French Court, by sending over the Marchioness of Ely, her favourite lady in waiting, to attend on the Empress at Paris. Lady Ely was, besides the physician and the personal attendants, the only eye-witness of the birth. The ministers and high dignitaries of

the Empire could not be summoned until the Prince had actually seen the light. Lady Ely often spoke to me of that event, and assured me that, despite the malicious reports then current in Paris, all that happened was perfectly regular.

In recognition of Lord Palmerston's services in the conduct of the war and the promotion of peace, the Queen granted him the Order of the Garter, a distinction all the greater since just then there was no Blue Ribbon vacant, and a Commoner as a rule would not have expected to receive one. When the intention was first mentioned to the noble Viscount, he is said to have replied with the characteristic question, 'Why should I bribe myself?' Nevertheless, that did not prevent him from giving eloquent expression to his gratitude, and leaving the Queen under the impression that he was thoroughly delighted with this mark of favour.

Lord Hardinge, the Commander-in-Chief of the British army, failed, like Lord Raglan, to survive the strain and excitement of this heavy time. He died (Sept. 24) from the effects of a stroke of paralysis, which had seized him last July in the presence of the Queen. The loss of this old and trusted servant was keenly felt by the Court. The Commandership-in-Chief was given to the Duke of Cambridge (July 16) on the proposal of the Ministry and with the approval of the nation.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.—1856.

London, Feb. 4: Interview with Lord Clarendon—Conciliatory Disposition of the Government—M. de Fonton's Confidences—Interview with Disraeli.—London, Feb. 5: Interview with Disraeli (continued)—Admission of Prussia to the Peace Conferences—The fifth Point of the Anglo-French Demands.—London, Feb. 9: Prussia and the Peace Conferences—Small Hopes in the City of the Permanence of Peace.—London, Feb. 15: Audience of Prince Albert—His Views on the Situation.—London, April 4: Conclusion of Peace—Gloomy Forebodings.—London, May 19: Secret Treaty of April 15 between England, Austria, and France—Brunnow's Return to London.—London, July 14: Coming Debate on Italian Affairs.

London: Feb. 4, 1856.

A CONCILIATORY disposition has decidedly gained the upper hand in Government circles. I hope that in my despatch of yesterday I have not put too sanguine a construction on the expressions of Lord Clarendon. I shall hardly be blamed for having followed, in my interview with him, which I reported two days ago, the example of prudent doctors, who seek to give ease to a fever patient by letting him talk out and greeting encouragingly the first symptoms of reawakening reason.

It will not escape your notice that the part which the Emperor Alexander, in Lord Clarendon's opinion, would have to play in Paris, betrays a striking affinity with the ideas expressed by M. de Fonton himself before his leaving Hanover, and recently repeated in writing by Labenski. I have not omitted to dwell pointedly on this circumstance,

which reminds me of words which I heard the Russian statesman utter at Vienna in November 1853. 'Admettez,' said Fonton to me then, 'que nous soyons forcés d'évacuer les principautés et de signer une paix comme nous n'en avons pas signé depuis un siècle. Nous aurions toujours à y gagner. Car la question d'Orient une fois résolue d'une manière ou de l'autre, nous pourrions licencier les deux tiers de nos armées, maintenir la Pologne avec 150,000 hommes, laisser cinquante ou même cent mille comme joujoux à l'Empereur, et avec les économies que nous ferions de cette manière construire nos chemins de fer, etc. En choisissant cette voie nous regagnerions en dix ou vingt ans tout ce que nous aurions perdu et bien au-delà.'

Should Fonton, as the newspapers say he will, accompany Brunnow to Paris, he will thank me, I hope, for having introduced him in this manner to the British plenipotentiary.

Wishing to improve the closer acquaintance I had made last year with the leaders of the Opposition, I called on Disraeli to-day. In order to explain to him our position, I began by asking him to read your despatch of July 9, 1854. After studying it attentively he characterised it as 'a very well written, most able State paper.' I then described to him the unobtrusive efforts on behalf of peace which had been made by the Saxon Government since last November. I showed him that the main difficulty, namely to obtain the assent of Russia to the neutralisation of the Black Sea, had already been solved by your private and confidential correspondence with Count Nesselrode and Baron Brunnow, before the Cabinet of St. Petersburg could have had any anticipation of the Conferences since begun in Paris between the Allies of December, to say nothing of the five Points themselves. I added that if Russia had only conducted the negotiations more promptly,

she would have avoided the appearance of having yielded to the Austrian Ultimatum. Finally, I communicated to him in strict confidence your despatch of the 6th inst. Disraeli, after reading this paper also with the utmost attention, returned it to me with the words, 'Now, all this is clear to me; Saxony solved the real knot.' 'At any rate we did our best,' I answered, 'as you did the other night in the House of Commons.'

Our conversation then fell on the subject which interested me most. In terse incisive language Disraeli described to me clearly the present state of things here since Parliament was last prorogued. He had been much blamed, he said, among his own party for his vote on the Turkish loan. But he knew perfectly well what he was doing. It was of importance to him to give a hint to those in Paris, and let them know that Palmerston was standing on weaker legs than they supposed, and that the war party had lost ground in Parliament. Nevertheless, his friends were still dissatisfied. He had been pestered with letters urging him to speak in favour of continuing the war, as otherwise he would jeopardise the future of his party. But he had held his tongue and kept his hands in his pockets, and contented himself with scaring the Ministers into a more pacific line of conduct, by holding up the bugbear of an understanding with Gladstone and Bright. In the end everything had gone better than his friends had thought possible. Instead of the dreaded dissolution of the Conservative party, that party had rallied round him all the more firmly on his return to town, and was now better disciplined than ever. 'For they have seen,' he added, not without self-consciousness, 'that I led them on the right way. The war party is dead. Roebuck has made a *fiasco* with his declamations, and Layard, who came to the debate on the Address

with a whole library under his arm, never ventured to deliver his carefully prepared speech. All this, because I did not neglect to take in hand the conduct of the debate from the outset, to calm down passions and to deprive Palmerston of any excuse for coming forward with a warlike rodomontade about the honour of England and so forth. The Premier had nothing left but to thank me for my moderation, and to declare as mildly as a lamb his entire concurrence in my views. Thus I forced him to separate himself at the very commencement of the sitting from his own most bellicose followers, and induced the Liberal party to believe that the Ministry had gone over bodily to our camp. I look upon the matter as over. If Russia meets us half-way with an honest desire for peace, and if Austria and France hold firm together, our Ministers must yield. My care meanwhile will be to prevent any pretext for exciting debates.'

So far Disraeli. I did not neglect this opportunity of ascertaining his views on two further heads: the first, as to the admission of Prussia to the Conferences; and the second as to the further demands to be presented to Russia under Point 5. In both respects Disraeli's words were most satisfactory, and I propose to revert to them to-morrow.

London: Feb. 5, 1856.

With reference to my letter of yesterday which I had to break off owing to the post, I have the honour to add the following as to my conversation with Disraeli.

I tried especially to show that it was clearly in the interest of England to further rather than prevent the admission of Prussia to the Peace Conferences. It must surely be worth while, I urged, if only for the sake of future eventualities, be they a Franco-Austrian or a Franco-Russian alliance, to come

to an understanding with Protestant Germany. Now Prussia without Germany was nothing, and that fact was recognised in Berlin. But that was the very reason why the Prussians, in the event of the Bund being excluded from the Peace Conferences, would be better representatives of specifically German interests than Austria. At any rate, if Prussia's signature was wanted to the treaty of peace, she must be invited also to the Conferences.

In this reasoning Disraeli readily concurred, and assured me that the Opposition would offer no objection in case Prussia—as personally he seemed to wish—were admitted to the negotiations.

The second inquiry related to the demands still to be presented to Russia under Point 5. My question was, whether the Opposition regarded the so-called regulation of the Turkish frontier in Asia, and the cession of some Circassian forts on the eastern coast of the Black Sea, as concessions which British interests absolutely required. 'I really think not,' was Disraeli's answer. 'All this is mere bluster; and if Austria and France hold together, the English Ministers will be obliged to give way.' Thus much seems certain, so far as I can see, that Austria and France have rendered Russia a real service by deciding, against the wish of the English Cabinet and without previously informing them of the fact, not to include in the Ultimatum the demands on Point 5. The main charge brought against Walewski here is that he has sanctioned the smuggling, as they call it, of this agreement behind his Emperor's back. For those demands, not having been included in the Ultimatum, have now become an open question. On the other hand, it would be a mistake to attach too much importance to them, and to disregard in this respect Lord Clarendon's advice. For even if the war party in England

were scattered to the four winds to-morrow, Lord Palmerston is still powerful enough to inflame the smouldering war heat of the English, which nobody else could so soon or so easily control.

London: Feb. 9, 1856.

To-day's leading article in the 'Press' shows that my efforts, of which I informed you confidentially on the 4th and 5th, have not remained entirely fruitless. Excepting the bold assertion that Prussia was said to have summoned the Bamberg Conference, the article in Disraeli's organ is an almost *verbatim* statement of my argument. The writer, it is true, has overlooked the fact that the admission of Prussia to the Peace Conferences only appears to us desirable in case she fails to obtain such admission for the German Diet. But, alas! the German Diet is too abstract a notion to the practical English, to hope for any warm interest here in its favour.

As regards Prussia, Count Bernstorff seems right in assuming that France has urged on England strongly, but hitherto in vain, the admission of Prussian plenipotentiaries. It would be a sign of such wholly unjustifiable blindness, if the matter were to shipwreck on the opposition of the English Ministers, that I cannot possibly surrender all hopes.

In the City the prospects of peace are hailed not without deep misgivings. A settlement is thought probable, but not any permanent peace. I have had an opportunity of discussing the situation with the head of a large mercantile firm. He assured me that as a Christian he sincerely wished for peace. Nevertheless, there was an ominous import in the feeling of shame experienced by John Bull at the manner in which the war had been begun, carried on, and concluded. If the Crimean army were now to return home without laurels,

the history of the first winter would at once incense the people and give a dangerous impetus to the movement against the aristocracy. The latter would be forced, perhaps reluctantly, but in the interest of England as well as of their class, to seize the first best opportunity for war which either Germany or Italy might offer, simply in order to open a safety valve abroad against the threatening revolution at home. For people in England were being heard complaining more loudly every day that Lord Palmerston had damaged English influence on the Continent by leaving in 1848 and 1849 the Revolution in the lurch; and so rapid, in a word, was the spread of the inflammable material, that nobody could reckon on the Peace of Paris lasting more than six months or a year. The upper classes in England were indulging in day dreams which nobody could share who came in daily contact with the people.

I quote these remarks since they were made by a man whom I have always found free from prejudice, and who has amassed a large fortune mainly by his clever forecasts of political events. Of course it must not be overlooked that the change in favour of peace has taken many City men wholly by surprise, and that time must be given them to understand it.

London: Feb. 15, 1856.

Yesterday afternoon I waited on Prince Albert. The Prince followed with sympathy and increasing interest my narrative of our efforts to recommend peace at St. Petersburg.

His Royal Highness remarked as follows: 'Much as we may have to thank the Saxon, Prussian, and other German Governments for their earnest advocacy of peace, it cannot be denied that in the present case the Russian Cabinet has yielded

simply and solely to necessity, to the conviction that the Austrian Ambassador would demand his passports. Russia was too exhausted to let matters come to a rupture with Austria. It is the old game of last year. The Austrian Ultimatum is met with counter propositions. These being rejected, Russia waits till the last moment to announce the "acceptation pure et simple," this year of five, last year of three or four Points. I am afraid that such proceedings, if continued in Paris, will be of a piece with what we experienced last year in Vienna. There are ominous signs of this already. In the very Note accepting the five Points an attempt is made, by removing a comma and changing an indicative into a subjunctive, so to colour the agreement respecting the neutralisation of the Black Sea as to make it seem to emanate, not from a European compact, but from a private convention with Turkey. Moreover, I don't like Baron Brunnow's premature appearance in Paris. This importunity does not augur well. And above all I cannot understand how for such important negotiations they could have selected a man who was so egregiously deceived about the policy of England before the war began. I can only hope that he will not fall into the old error of mistaking the gossip of the *salons* and Stock Exchange of Paris for the policy of the French Emperor. That policy is not to be learned in the drawing-room of the Princess Lieven. Unhappily the Emperor has the misfortune to be represented by a Foreign Minister whose incapacity is here no secret. It needs no very clever diplomatist to outwit Count Walewski. I only hope that Baron Brunnow will not let himself be led astray by so cheap a triumph. He is a man of peace, you say. No doubt: a stay at Darmstadt is tedious, and does not give the Baron the amusements of a large city. But it is obviously his duty to obtain as cheap a peace as pos-

sible. Only no shams! In making peace it is just as in horse-dealing. People are not yet agreed as to what is the best way of setting about it when a man wants to sell a horse. Ought he to name a price, and then proceed to bargain, or fix his last price at once? When it came to proposing the terms of peace, we started here with the view that the most advantageous and dignified course was to name a fixed price. If peace is accepted on the terms which we consider necessary in the interest of Europe, we will conclude peace with pleasure, otherwise we will not. Our policy is simple, clear, and easily intelligible to anyone who surveys the situation calmly and reasonably. What we desire is either the prompt conclusion of a sound peace, or the prosecution of the war under circumstances the most favourable to ourselves. We are now in a better position than before to prosecute the war with energy, and, without wishing to ruin Russia, to deal that colossus the most damaging blows. English indolence has taken several years to get ready. Our preparations are now complete, and we can show that England is not made up only of cotton spinners and shopkeepers, as we are told. We might have struck home at Cronstadt and St. Petersburg in the first year of the war, had our fleet been managed by a more resolute man than Sir Charles Napier. The possession of St. Petersburg would have given us Sweden and Finland, and perhaps have put the Baltic Provinces into other hands. I rely on the firmness of Lord Clarendon and Count Buol; they will know how to checkmate from the first the finessing of the Russians. In a few weeks we are bound to know all for certain. If, as I heartily desire, peace is established, it will stand as an experience unique in history and serve to promote the progress of mankind, that two great nations should have succeeded, by dint of tremendous

sacrifices, in carrying on and bringing to an end a war with clean hands, without deriving from it any individual benefit to themselves, and with the self-denying object of vindicating right and justice, and punishing past and preventing future wrong.'

The Prince's remark that England and France had found but meagre support, was one which I thought I ought not to leave unanswered. I insisted that the policy of Lord Palmerston in 1848 and 1849 had left behind it a feeling of deep distrust, and was quite sufficient to account for any want of sympathy with England on the Continent, and especially in Germany. Both parties, thanks to that policy, had been alienated: the Conservatives, who accused England of supporting the Revolution; and the Radicals, who reproached Lord Palmerston for having at first encouraged and then deserted it.

'No doubt,' was the answer; 'but let us rather say that Lord Palmerston has simply abused the foreign policy of this country, to improve his own personal position as a party man. The egotism of this statesman, who, however, has done far less than is ascribed to him, is one item on our debtor account; but don't forget the other one, our Press. Moreover, my opinion, speaking plainly, is that the neutral attitude of Germany has been determined far less by sympathies and antipathies than by interest.'

These words show a statesmanlike view, such as I had not yet met with here. Englishmen were not unprejudiced enough to admit that the interests of Germany in the present question coincided only up to a certain point with those of England.

As to the resolution of the Diet, the Prince remarked that whatever might become of that, the wish, at any rate, to remain inactive, would be plainly readable between the lines.

With regard to Prussia, he admitted the extreme impor-

tance, when once the question of war or peace was decided, of securing her signature to the Treaty of Peace. I did not omit to quote the opinions expressed in the Opposition papers, which agreed with what had just fallen from the Prince himself, and recommended the last leading article of the 'Press.'

I remarked in passing, that it was clearly England's interest to make use of this opportunity for effecting an understanding with Prussia and Germany, as there was a possibility of a Franco-Russian alliance. The Prince replied very emphatically that people in England had no fears of such an eventuality, but, on the contrary, were perfectly certain that the Emperor Napoleon, so long as he lived, would hold firm, even in time of peace, to the alliance with England. A Franco-Russian alliance was out of the question, since England would never consent to play the part of third in such a combination.

At the close of this conversation the Prince mentioned Montalembert's book, 'De l'Avenir de l'Angleterre,' which had appeared in the last month. This book, written with the same ulterior design as the 'Germania' of Tacitus, criticised on the whole the present situation in England with acuteness and accuracy, notwithstanding the mystic absurdities in which the author went astray in dealing with religious questions. I had just finished reading this book, and do not fail to recommend it to your attention, it having found a favourable judgment in so competent a quarter.[1]

London: April 4, 1856.

I cannot unhappily share the exaggerated joy at the peace

[1] It is well known that Montalembert for writing this book had to undergo a trial which was very fatal to the Emperor's popularity in England. See Greville's *Memoirs*, vol. ii. p. 214, which have appeared some months after the publication of Count Vitzthum's work and during the progress of this translation.—Ed.

concluded on March 30, the anniversary of the entry of the Allies into Paris. To say that the Eastern Question is now finally settled is, at any rate, a bold assertion. Apart from that, there is still so much 'in an unsettled state,' that Clarendon seems quite right in saying, 'Nous avons fait une paix, mais pas la paix.'

How long will the French legions, covetous of easier and more lucrative laurels, allow their Cæsar to pursue, at least apparently, an unselfish policy? Who will pay the piper? Prussia on the Rhine? or Austria in Italy? or both? and what will happen, if the coquetry between Russia and France should culminate in an offensive and defensive alliance, the object of which could only be Germany? 'No blue devils,' you will say. Very well; but I cannot help having gloomy forebodings. Austria has unfortunately played a subordinate part in Paris; Count Buol was decidedly displeasing. Orloff's sympathy for Sardinia is, in any case, a bad omen. The condition of Italy is extremely serious, and that of Prussia almost as bad. One looks vainly in either quarter for a prospect of improvement. In Parliament the ratification of the Treaty of Peace is being eagerly awaited, to enable an attack upon the Ministry. I don't believe in a crisis being close at hand, although everybody speaks of one. Palmerston will shift his tack, and hold his own till the end of the year. What will happen after that, Heaven only knows.

London: May 19, 1856.

Lord Cowley's hasty return to Paris, Orloff's prolonged stay in that capital, and the delay which has apparently occurred in the appointment of Prince Dolgoruki, are all connected with the secret separate Treaty, signed on April 15, by England, France, and Austria. The publication of this

document,[1] which was not originally intended to see the light, has cleared the air like a thunderstorm. The true importance and bearings of this alliance cannot yet be ascertained, its secret history not having yet been sufficiently explained. Thus much only seems certain, that the Cabinet of St. Petersburg has given up trying to put a good face on a bad matter, and affects to treat the 'œuvre posthume'—as Brunnow is pleased to call the Treaty—as a thing of only slight importance. But at present all on this subject is guesswork, as regular diplomatic relations with Russia are not yet resumed. Business is conducted as hitherto through the Danish Minister at this Court, General Oxholm, and Baron Plessen still represents English interests *ad interim* in St. Petersburg. Not even the usual trade consuls have been appointed again. The meaningless personal attentions paid here in society to Baron Brunnow, cannot deceive one as to the coldness which marks the first advances to a resumption of the official relations interrupted by the war. Scarcely had the lion of the day taken his departure, when faults without number were found with his coming. Some criticised the fact that Brunnow had come *sans cérémonie*, without any following. Others thought that the new President of the Council, Count Orloff, ought not to have shirked the short journey from Paris to this

[1] The text of this treaty, which has never been abrogated, is as follows:

'ART. I. Les hautes parties contractantes garantissent solidairement entre elles l'indépendance et l'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman, consacrées par le traité conclu à Paris, le trente mars, mil huit cent cinquante six.

'ART. II. Toute infraction aux stipulations du dit traité sera considérée par les puissances signataires du présent traité comme *casus belli*. Elles s'entendront avec la sublime Porte sur les mesures devenues nécessaires, et détermineront sans retard entre elles l'emploi de leurs forces militaires et navales.

'ART. III. Le présent traité sera ratifié, et les ratifications en seront échangées dans l'espace de quinze jours, ou plus tôt si faire se peut.' See *Correspondence etc. respecting the Rights and Privileges of the Latin and Greek Churches in Turkey*, vol. ii. pp. 1001–2. London, 1856.

country, to announce in person the accession of his Emperor. Others again see in the choice of Count Chreptowitch a proof of the small value apparently attached in Russia to the restoration of friendly relations with England. It is not entirely without a purpose that it is thought sufficient here to send the Queen's answer to the Russian notification by the hands of a major-general. In like manner the choice of Lord Wodehouse as British Minister in St. Petersburg seems to indicate an intention of meeting coldness with coldness. Such, at any rate, is the opinion of men who are well informed. The publication of the Secret Treaty of April 15, as well as the assurance, pretended to have been given to Count Orloff, that the Emperor Napoleon only consented to that instrument out of deference to the wishes of England and Austria, are not calculated to pacify the distrust still lingering on each side. On the other hand, the ever increasing intimacy of the relations between Austria and France is watched here not without some jealousy. The unpleasant apprehensions caused already by the promotion of Hübner and Bourqueney as ambassadors, have been further heightened by the news that the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian is not to extend his visit beyond Paris to London. Lord Clarendon seems only to be strengthening this jealousy by expressing his conviction, that he has acted in the interests of his country in letting England be included in the Franco-Austrian alliance, and thus securing her against political isolation. How dangerous such isolation can become even to first-rate Powers, is shown by the example of Russia. Certainly the Treaty of April 15 is diametrically opposed to Lord Palmerston's policy in 1848 and 1849. England cannot be allied at one and the same time with Austria in the East, and with Sardinia against Austria in Italy. Nowhere is this felt more plainly than in

Turin, where the indignation at the Treaty is at least as great as in St. Petersburg. With the strengthened guarantee of the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, all hope disappears of Austria being induced to cede Lombardy to Piedmont in exchange for the Danubian Principalities. 'If the Treaty of April 15 means anything,' said Disraeli to me yesterday, 'it means that we are to support Austria in Italy.' Nobody appears to have recognised this obligation more clearly than Lord Clarendon. It is said that this statesman, who has evidently shaken off many political prejudices in Paris, has come back with views as to the treatment of the Italian question which have little harmony with those of the Premier. Some think, indeed, that this difference of opinion contains the germ of a serious quarrel in the Cabinet. Lord Palmerston takes his stand on public opinion, which is just as unfavourable to Austria now as it was in 1848. Lord Clarendon, in preaching calmness and moderation, appeals to the future, and points to the instructive lessons of the last few years. It will be extremely interesting to observe the attitude of Parliament. Moreover, nobody doubts that negotiations respecting Italy are now pending between Austria and France, which may easily assume a more definite shape during the Archduke's stay in Paris. On these negotiations will ultimately depend the policy of England. Lord Palmerston cannot venture on a serious contest with Clarendon if the latter is able to reckon on Napoleon's support.

London: July 14, 1856.

To-night's debate in the House of Commons, which is awaited with eager interest, will largely affect the future position of Lord Palmerston, even if it produces no immediate results. The 'Times' explains the readiness of the

Commons to devote a precious night, so shortly before the close of the Session, to a question of foreign politics, by the deep interest supposed to be taken by Englishmen in the sufferings of the so-called oppressed Italy. Nobody who knows the real facts will help smiling at the hypocrisy of the City paper. The Italian question, as it stands at the present moment, is nothing but the dregs of mutual delusions, brought about by the unnatural alliance of Sardinia with the Western Powers against Russia. Politicians who, like King Leopold, look below the surface, have long since detected in the self-seeking ambition of Count Cavour the origin of difficulties manufactured to provoke the present excitement. Cavour, however, would have been quite powerless, had he not found in the Radicals in England allies as willing as they are dangerous. The war against Russia owed its momentary popularity to the fact that it was hailed as the commencement of a crusade against all the State institutions on the Continent which did not conform to the English pattern. The peace was unpopular because this propagandist mania had not been satisfied. The Ministry, consisting in reality of only two, which owed its existence solely to the disunion and weakness of its opponents, sought and found in coquetting with the opinion of the day a means of tiding over the Session without a crisis. The means to this end was the 'Italian question.' They affected a valiant indignation at the tyranny of the King of the Two Sicilies. The ministerial lying prophets of the 'Times' and 'Morning Post' held up the 'modern Caligula and Tiberius' to the scorn of the multitude. Had the Neapolitan Government, with their native indolence, not rejected the railway schemes of English capitalists, nobody would have thought of saying a word against that tyranny. Without any cause—for the political trial which is now supply-

ing the English newspapers with welcome material for exaggerated reports had not yet begun—Lord Clarendon let himself be seduced into recommending to the Neapolitan Government, in concert with the French, a general amnesty and a change in the system of administration.[1] Count Walewski, enlightened by his own stay in Naples and the sober-minded reports of the French Ambassador in that city, took good care to attenuate the effect of this joint representation. He contented himself with recommending the King to grant an amnesty, and empty the prisons, if possible, of political offenders. These representations were, however, courteously but firmly declined, as an uncalled-for interference with the sovereign rights of an independent Power. In Paris this rejection met with the most favourable reception. 'J'aime un souverain qui sait maintenir sa dignité,' was the comment of Napoleon. This view is said to have been practically registered in an earnest remonstrance, addressed to the English Cabinet, against coercive measures. The English Ministers also, especially Lord Clarendon, may feel that they have gone too far, but they are not masters of the situation, notwithstanding all their Parliamentary victories over the Opposition. To-night's debate will show this. Lord John Russell's premeditated attack is a consequence of the rebuff which Palmerston has recently suffered in the House of Lords. The Premier had readily offered his hand to the well-known compromise, in order to remedy his error of precipitation in granting a life peerage to Lord Wensleydale. He has separated himself on this question from his own party, whose sympathies appear to revert again to their old favourite, Lord John Russell. The latter, with his accustomed selfishness, is

[1] See Lord Clarendon's despatch to Sir W. Temple of May 19, 1856, in *Correspondence relating to the Affairs of Naples*, p. 1. London, 1857.

making use of the Italian question to regain the leadership of the Liberal party, and Lord Palmerston will need all his cleverness to get his neck out of the noose. Lord John, like all those who are behind the scenes in this affair, knows very well that the Ministry can do nothing to enforce their representations in Naples and achieve any practical result. He is only looking for a favourable opportunity of qualifying himself once more for the Premiership.

Disraeli is awaiting not without keen interest the result of to-night's duel. Lord John, as the weaker of the two antagonists, would perhaps be more acceptable than Lord Palmerston to the leader of the Conservatives. Disraeli intends to reply to Palmerston, and to scourge the Ministerial policy of interference with the arguments which have been already stated in the admirable leading article in the 'Press' of the day before yesterday.

'Don't forget to come to-morrow evening to the House,' said Disraeli to me yesterday; 'the debate will be interesting as a prelude to the next Session.'

Two days ago took place the ceremony of the investiture of Lord Palmerston and Earl Fortescue with the Order of the Garter.

CHAPTER IX.

LONDON.—1857.

Reduction of Land and Sea Forces—Wars with Persia and China—Cobden's Vote of Censure—Dissolution of Parliament—Indian Mutiny—'Les Idées Napoléoniennes'—Persigny—His Efforts to maintain the Anglo-French Alliance—The French Emperor and Empress at Osborne—Real Meaning of the Visit—English Coast Defences—The Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian in England—Illness of Frederick William IV. at Pillnitz—Prince Jerome Napoleon in Dresden—Projected Marriage of Prince George of Saxony—King John's Instructions.

I RETURNED to London freed from the hybrid position of Minister Resident, and tendered to the Queen my credentials as Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary.

During my absence, haste, not to say overhaste, had been made to place the land and sea forces on a peace footing. And yet England had already two more wars upon her hands, with Persia and China. The first was ended quickly and satisfactorily, but the second led to somewhat lengthy complications, and was only terminated by the peace dictated by England and France at Pekin in the following year. The bombardment of Canton by Admiral Seymour gave rise to very grave debates in Parliament, immediately after its opening on February 3.

Although the popularity of Lord Palmerston had survived the Peace of Paris, it was noticed even at the beginning of the Session that the veteran had lost his former energy and especially his imperturbable good humour. His first

attack of gout had visibly weakened him, and Lady Palmerston spoke with the utmost concern of her husband's state of health. His numerous rivals and enemies now thought the moment come for venturing a serious attack upon the Ministry. Lord John Russell was sulky because there had been no mention in the Queen's Speech of Parliamentary Reform. The Peelites were dissatisfied at the natural consequences of their own impolitic behaviour, although the feeble attempts made by Lord Derby to gain them over to his side were frustrated by the opposition of his own party and the irresolution of Gladstone. Disraeli, who denounced the whole policy which had led to the Crimean War, made use of what was told him in confidence by Walewski to embarrass Palmerston with questions; and lastly the friends of peace, Cobden and Bright, were furious about the muddle in China. Notwithstanding the heated atmosphere then prevailing in the House of Commons, the debate on the Budget passed off satisfactorily, and the proposals of the Chancellor of the Exchequer were agreed to, after Disraeli's counter resolution had been defeated, by a majority of eighty (February 23).

A few days later (March 3) the Ministry suffered a decisive defeat through Cobden, his Resolutions censuring their policy with regard to China being carried in the Commons by a majority of sixteen.

Lord Palmerston, who saw through the weakness of the Tory Opposition, wound up the debate with a brief but vigorous speech, ridiculing the 'atoms' which had conspired against him. He knew very well that the country would support him on the Chinese question, and not the Opposition split up into single factions. He therefore advised the Queen to dissolve Parliament, and the new elections strengthened his position in an unexpected manner.

This result was mainly promoted by the mighty storm which arose in the distant East, and shook to its foundations the Indian Empire with its two hundred millions of British subjects. The first news of the outbreak of mutinies among the Indian troops reached London as early as the end of February. The country felt the need of the pilot to whose energy was due the successful termination of the Crimean War. And yet this energy, at least at first, left much to be desired. It was entirely owing to Prince Albert that the Ministers were at length awakened from their careless optimism. All available troops were hurriedly despatched to India. Fortunately generals were found in Sir Colin Campbell and Havelock who were equal to the critical emergency. Sir Colin Campbell had already distinguished himself in the Crimea. When the Government resolved to entrust to him the supreme command over the Queen's troops in India, and he was asked when he could start, his laconic answer was, 'To-morrow!' Not a day too soon did Sir Colin arrive in Calcutta (August 14), where he found the regiments which had been originally destined for China, but which Lord Elgin, the Chief Commissioner at Canton, placed with patriotic self-sacrifice at the disposal of the Indian Governor-General.

The suspicion that Russia had had a hand in the Indian Mutiny was only strengthened by the fact that Russian diplomacy eagerly denied the charge. The old saying, 'Qui s'excuse s'accuse,' was not unjustly remembered against them.

But the catastrophe which then surprised the country is best explained by the rotten system of the East India Company. The same defects of military administration which had been experienced at the beginning of the Crimean War were here repeated on a large scale. Just as the first British army had been sacrificed to red-tapeism and neglect in high places,

because no one knew his proper duties, in other words who was responsible for the commissariat, so in India the authority was shared between the Directors of the Company and the Ministers of the Crown. The native troops, composed of national elements, were dependent on the former, the Governor-General and the small force of Queen's troops on the latter. Unfortunately the Governor-General, Lord Canning, a talented and active statesman, in the prime of life, had only just come to Calcutta, and the field was entirely new to him. Mistakes, misunderstandings, and disputes as to authority were unavoidable, and increased the difficulty of the military commanders in restoring order in that colossal empire with such a handful of troops. The conviction was forced upon the public at home, that this complex mass of states and territories, already swollen to an avalanche, had taken dimensions beyond the power of a joint-stock company. The more indignant men became at the tale of horrors perpetrated on women and children, the more plainly they saw that a few old City merchants, who now and then discussed Indian affairs, were not equal to the task of governing an empire vaster than even that of the Roman Cæsars. Thus good grew out of evil. The East India Company disappeared, and India became directly subject to the Crown. The pertinacity and valour of the British troops triumphed against unprecedented odds, and brilliantly restored the prestige of Old England, which had been seriously shaken by the Crimean War. India, it may be said, was then for the first time really conquered. Since that conquest the centre of gravity of the British Empire lies in Asia. The words spoken by Lord Beaconsfield several years later, when he invited the Queen to adopt the title of Empress of India, 'We have become an Asiatic Power,' had a deeper meaning than Europe

chose to think. They suggest, at the same time, a danger which the usual British optimism might easily be tempted to underrate. The Indian Mutiny of 1857 hangs like the sword of Damocles over Great Britain as regards her position in the world.

But Europe also, as well as Asia, gave Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon ample cause for anxiety, while at home the new elections placed at stake their very existence as Ministers.

The object which Walewski confessed to me before the beginning of the Crimean War had, at least apparently, been attained. Already, during the negotiations of the Paris Congress, the wily diplomacy of Russia had spared no flattery to gain over the Emperor of the French. The birth of his son seemed to secure the future of his dynasty. The eulogiums of the English Press strengthened the illusion that Napoleon had really gained for himself the position which the Emperor Nicholas in 1853 sacrificed to his idiosyncrasies. It was characteristic that on the Continent it had become a general habit, when speaking of the Emperor Napoleon, to designate him simply as '*He*.' '*He* has done this,' '*He* has said that,' '*He* will,' &c. were at that time customary forms of speech, and even the Prince of Prussia used them.

French statesmen would never have sacrificed 90,000 men and about two milliards of francs for the sake of England. It was important to prove palpably by action the power they thought to have acquired. The author of the 'Idées Napoléoniennes' considered it his mission to wipe out the stain of Waterloo and cancel the treaties of 1814 and 1815, which, as he repeatedly declared, were aimed directly against France, in order to reconstruct entirely the map of Europe on the newly discovered principle of nationalities. In vain had Lord Clarendon protested in Paris against these dangerous day

dreams, in vain had Queen Victoria pointed out in her private letters to the Emperor of the French that England had no sympathy with these French vagaries.

The gambling on the Stock Exchange in which the Emperor's *entourage*, with but few exceptions, indulged, had materially assisted the Russian intrigues. Walewski, and in a still more questionable manner Morny, the half-brother of Napoleon, and the originator of the *coup d'état*, had become completely Russianised. The latter had represented France with extraordinary pomp and show at the coronation of Alexander II., and had returned with a Russian wife and the most decided sympathies for the Russian Court. That blood had been shed and battles fought for the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire, had long been forgotten. This 'Moor' also had done his duty.

Among the questions which had remained unsettled in the negotiations of the Congress, the regulation of the Bessarabian frontier and the fate of the Danubian Principalities gave rise to diplomatic disputes, which tested severely the alliance between England and France. Napoleon had taken it into his head that the populations of Moldavia and Wallachia were longing for a political union under a foreign prince belonging to a European reigning family. The Porte, mindful of the maxim, *Divide et impera*, opposed this scheme, so undeniably dangerous to her sovereign rights. Austria and England, in the recognised interests of Turkey, supported her in this opposition; whilst Thouvenel, the French Ambassador, did his utmost to frighten the Divan, and remind them of the threats of Prince Menschikoff. The English alliance, which was never popular in France, would have been shipwrecked then and there had another than Persigny been French Ambassador in London.

Fialin, created Count by the Pope, and later on Duc de Persigny by Napoleon III., had ever since the Strasburg adventure, in which he took a part as sub-officer of the Guides, remained the most loyal adherent of his Emperor. He had shared his exile in England, had let fly in Boulogne the Imperial eagle so jeered at by the newspapers, and was, perhaps, the only man who, in times of weal or woe, dared to tell the Imperial *parvenu* the truth. Persigny, an insignificant-looking man of middle height, was a self-taught person. Destitute of the rudiments of knowledge acquired at school, he had employed the years of his exile in completing his defective education. He knew England better, perhaps, than most of his countrymen. His axiom, that no French Government could hold out against the hostility of the English Press and Stock Exchange, had become with him an article of faith from his long residence in England and his study of the secret history of the Revolutions of 1830 and 1848. According to his view Charles X. owed his fall not to the July Ordinances, but to his attempt to defy the English Press by his alliance with Russia, while Louis Philippe was driven away because he had planned the Spanish marriages with Guizot, and thereby broken his word to England. It is not surprising that Persigny, in spite of his manners, which savoured only too often of the guard-room, should enjoy a certain popularity in England, and that his honesty, in contrast to the Stock Exchange speculators in Paris, should be highly appreciated. The eccentricities, therefore, of his pretty young wife, if smiled at, were judged with leniency.

Owing to this partiality of Persigny's for England, his relations with Walewski were already so clouded over in 1857 that the Ambassador had almost ceased to correspond with his chief. If a despatch arrived which it was absolutely

necessary to communicate, Persigny took it to Clarendon with the remark, 'Lisez cela vous-même; ce sont encore des bêtises de Walewski.' With this kind of official intercourse it was unavoidable that the Anglo-French alliance should get more and more out of joint. The visit of the Grand Duke Constantine to Paris, the intended meeting of the Emperors Alexander and Napoleon in Stuttgart arranged by old Brunnow, the more and more menacing aspect of affairs in Constantinople, all induced Persigny to go to Paris in order, as he said, to rescue his Emperor out of the hands of the idiots ('pour sauver mon Empereur des mains des imbéciles'). He painted things so black, and described so elequently the dangers of a rupture with England, that the Emperor determined to request an interview with the Queen at Osborne.

Though not liking, as a rule, to receive foreign visitors in the Isle of Wight, still the English Court was willing and ready to make use of this opportunity for a private exchange of views. The visit took place in the beginning of August. The French Emperor and Empress, accompanied by Walewski, arrived at Osborne on the 6th, and remained there till the 10th.

Strict precautions were taken by the police on both sides of the Channel. English and French detectives watched all the landing places in the Isle of Wight. They had instructions to search carefully all fishing boats, it being feared that French or Italian refugees might attempt the Emperor's life. A boat of this kind crossed over with a single passenger from Southampton on the night of the 5th. As the passenger spoke only broken English, and that with a French accent, he was immediately arrested. He offered no resistance, and willingly allowed himself to be taken before Sir Richard Mayne. Great was Sir Richard's astonishment to recognise in this suspected refugee the French Ambassador. The Chief

Commissioner of Police was profuse in his apologies for the clumsiness of his agents, but Persigny answered with a smile that he could only congratulate him on the excellence of his precautions. Persigny himself told me this incident, adding that he had received a telegram late in the evening, and understood from it that the yacht 'La Reine Hortense' would convey the Emperor and Empress to Osborne some hours earlier than was expected. Not knowing whether the news had reached the Queen direct, he had thus resolved at once to take the next train to Southampton, in order to intimate orally the intended arrival. At Southampton he found that the last steamer for Cowes had long since left. To avoid wasting the night at Southampton, he had nothing left but to get taken over in a fishing boat. The crossing had been a long one, and instead of landing at Cowes, he had had himself taken to the Queen's private landing place. This only increased the suspicion of the police. He gladly submitted to arrest, since otherwise he would hardly have succeeded in reaching Osborne House, owing to the darkness of the night.

Lord Palmerston and Lord Clarendon, being summoned to Osborne, reluctantly obeyed. A preliminary understanding was arrived at on the burning question of the Danubian Principalities, and the interview at Osborne passed off apparently to the satisfaction of both parties. Sir Theodore Martin publishes in his 'Life of the Prince Consort' the letters exchanged between the Emperor and the Queen, full of friendly assurances, as well as an interesting Memorandum by the Prince of his conversations with Napoleon. These papers do not, however, contain the whole truth. I heard this a few years later from Prince Albert himself, who spoke to me on the subject as follows: 'Be assured of this, that next to myself, Napoleon

hates nobody more than the Prince of Prussia. But he honours me with his hatred because I spoiled his game at Osborne. He had come over to us in 1857, not so much on account of the Danubian Principalities, as to sound us and gain us over to his intended schemes against Austria. His fixed idea, to revise the map of Europe, he confessed to me then unreservedly, and proposed to me that we should conclude an offensive and defensive alliance. It is very possible,' added the Prince with a smile, 'that he had already won over Palmerston and Clarendon to this idea; for that man exercises a charm over our Ministers which I cannot understand. But he soon satisfied himself that nothing was to be done with me. I told him very quietly, but very firmly, that it was against all the traditions of this country to bind our hands for future eventualities, especially with a neighbour powerful enough to create such eventualities at any moment. He liked the hint, and tried then to obtain from Russia what he failed to obtain from us. We parted outwardly the best of friends, but the sting of my refusal remained behind—*hinc illæ iræ.*'

The not unfounded anxiety for the future which Prince Albert had conceived from his conversations with the French Emperor, caused him, a few days after Napoleon's departure, to ascertain with his own eyes the state of the fortifications at Cherbourg. He was able to do this without making any noise. Under the pretence of a pleasure trip, the Queen and her husband crossed over thither in the strictest *incognito*, and returned in a couple of days. The Prince had time to inspect with the eyes of a connoisseur the costly works which had now been completed. He did not omit to urge on the Ministers the necessity of placing the English harbours and coasts, against all accidents, in a similar state of defence.

Besides the French visit, the English Court received also in the course of this season the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian, who, together with Prince Frederick William of Prussia, was present at the christening of Princess Beatrice, the Queen's youngest child. As bridegroom of the Princess Charlotte of Belgium, the young Archduke met with the most cordial reception, and his amiable personal qualities contributed not a little to remove the prejudices which the Queen's husband, now formally declared 'Prince Consort,' had cherished against the House of Austria. I myself have had various opportunities of combating these deeply rooted prejudices. Prince Albert's was one of those superior minds which are tolerant of contradiction.

After Parliament was over, I went to Dresden. The stroke which had seized King Frederick William IV. at Pillnitz, after the completion of his cure at Marienbad, caused the greatest distress to the King and Queen of Saxony. The two monarchs were not only brothers-in-law, but also sympathetic friends. The softening of the brain which had revealed itself unmistakably in Frederick William IV., whose nerves had been seriously shaken by the affair at Neuenburg, rendered a change of Government imperative. The Prince of Prussia was entrusted, at first provisionally, and afterwards definitively, with the Regency.

Shortly afterwards, Prince Jerome Napoleon made his appearance at Pillnitz with the intention of suing for the hand of the Princess Sidonie of Saxony. King John, as a patriarchal father of a family, could not and would not force his daughter into a purely political marriage. Anti-Napoleonic prejudices gave no prospect of the young Princess entertaining the thought of such an alliance. She gave Prince Jerome no encouragement, and he forbore to press his suit.

There were not wanting those who lamented this, and thought that the Italian campaign of 1859 might perhaps have been avoided had a daughter of the Saxon King and not a Sardinian been the wife of the Prince Napoleon.

Be that as it may, the visit of the French Prince had to be returned, and King John determined to send for that purpose to Paris, in the following spring, his second son, Prince George.

On my taking leave of the King after Christmas, to return to my post, his Majesty said to me: 'I have been considering how best to give effect to the idea you mentioned to me two years ago, on your return from Portugal. I think the time has now arrived to busy ourselves in earnest about George's marriage. Your proposal of an alliance with the Court of Portugal has much to recommend it. I quite appreciate the political reasons you insisted on, but I beg you once for all to rest assured that I will exercise no compulsion on any of my children. I will not sacrifice the happiness of their lives to politics. If it could be so arranged that my son George should pay a visit from Paris to the Portuguese Court, that, in my opinion, would be perfectly proper. If the Infanta pleases the Prince, we will give our consent with pleasure. If she does not, he must be allowed to come back again, without being bound in any way. If the matter, as I hope it may, can be thus arranged, you, being the only one who knows the country and the people, will accompany my son to Lisbon.'

'The matter is not quite so simple as it seems,' I replied. 'Portugal is, politically speaking, in a certain relation of dependence towards England. English influence predominates in Lisbon. But, quite apart from that, the late Queen Maria da Gloria is an early friend of Queen Victoria, having

been brought up with her for some time as a child in Kensington Palace. Both of them married Coburg Princes, and shared, though far apart, the joys and sorrows incident to mothers of large families. Queen Victoria, therefore, takes the tender interest of a mother in the orphan children of her friend. Add to this that the young King Dom Pedro has conceived, during his visit to the English Court, such an attachment to Prince Albert, that the latter is really the present ruler of Portugal. Pedro V. does literally nothing without the advice of the Prince, to whom he writes almost every day. Under these circumstances, your Majesty will yourself guess that Prince George's first visit ought to be to London. If the Prince pleases the Queen, as we cannot but anticipate he will, the matter is as good as settled. Had the English Court, however, any objection to such an alliance, which I do not believe, the marriage would scarcely take place, notwithstanding a visit of the Prince to Lisbon. I leave it, therefore, to your Majesty to send Prince George for a time to London after his departure from Paris, so that I may present him to the Queen and Prince Albert.'

King John listened to me attentively, and remarked after a short reflection, 'It is all right; I trust George to you. Directly the proper time is fixed, I will telegraph to you to announce him to the Queen. You will then fetch him from Paris, and accompany him to Lisbon to see the bride.'

CHAPTER X.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.—1857.

London, June 24: State of Ferment in European Alliances—Question of the Danubian Principalities—The Grand Duke Constantine in Paris and England—Lord Elgin's China Instructions communicated to St. Petersburg—The Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian—His successful Visit to the English Court—Intended Meeting of the French and Russian Emperors—The Anglo-French Alliance.—London, August 15: Details of Napoleon's Visit to Osborne—Improved Relations between England and Russia—Count Chreptowitch and Lord Clarendon.

London: June 24, 1857.

THE more the process of fermentation which European alliances are now undergoing escapes the notice of the public and the indiscreet conjectures of the daily press, the more do I consider it my duty to put together the observations which have forced themselves here upon my mind.

After the latest war cloud had been dispersed by the amicable settlement of the Bolgrad question and the termination of hostilities with Persia, with peace the continuance also of the Anglo-French alliance seemed secured, through the exertions of Count Persigny. But if already in the Bolgrad question the Court party, represented in the French Council by Count Walewski, displayed a decided leaning towards Russia, that tendency showed itself still more plainly in the question, which was left open, of the Danubian Principalities. The political union of these provinces, desired by Russia, found a willing advocate in the 'Moniteur' and, in the person

of the French Commissioner in Bucharest, an agent who, full of youthful ardour, occasionally exchanged the part of a diplomatist for that of an agitator. The more firmly the Porte resisted the Russian proposals and shrank from union as 'le commencement d'un démembrement,' and the more passionately Austria—perhaps not always happily represented on the spot itself—extolled the view of Turkey as her own, the more difficult it was for British diplomacy, agreeing as it did in principle with the Divan and the Austrian Cabinet, to play the part of impartial mediator. According to the supposed proposal of England, Moldavia and Wallachia are to remain politically separate, but to be allied by a fiscal and military union. This proposal, however, does not appear to form, or to have formed, any object of negotiation. At any rate, Lord Clarendon only a few days ago designated the report to that effect as wholly groundless. But be that as it may, the question of the Danubian Principalities constitutes, if not the reason, at least a symptom of the coolness now existing in the Anglo-French alliance. As much offence at least has been given here in England by the coquetries of Paris with Russia, as in Paris by the *rapprochement* between England and Austria, which is becoming more intimate every day. It is just as if people here, after a period of disparagement, had discovered for the first time since the late peace the importance of the *vis inertiæ* which Austria can lay in the scales of European destiny. Nobody stands up now more frankly and firmly for the Austrian alliance than Lord Clarendon, who has found in Sir Hamilton Seymour a representative at Vienna as active as he is zealous. It was only to be expected that in proportion as relations assumed a more friendly footing between England and Austria, they should become cooler between Austria and France. In

fact, the position of the Austrian Ambassador in Paris seems to have become lately far from enviable.

The visit of the Grand Duke Constantine to Paris, brought about by the French, does not seem to have answered the expectations founded upon it. It has only served to bring out more sharply the wish of the Emperor Napoleon for a meeting with the Emperor Alexander on German soil. The Russian guest is said to have expressed perhaps too openly his scepticism as to the stability of affairs in France, as well as a certain disparagement of Napoleon's *entourage*. In a word, the visit has rather embarrassed than satisfied the French Court, and not even had the success with the public which the friends of Russia there expected. The Grand Duke has not wasted his time. He has studied the country and the people, and at St. Petersburg they know better now than they did how highly to value the power of France, whether as an enemy or an ally. The general stir in the French ports, the colossal fortifications on the northern coast, and the energy with which the heavy losses of the last war have been repaired, all this is said to have convinced the Russian High Admiral that in the event of a war between England and France the latter would not come off second best.

In contrast to what he has observed in France, the Grand Duke has been all the more surprised at the incredible neglect of the English coast defences. He has, among other things, subjected to a severe criticism the unfortunate attempt to apply to Portsmouth the system of Todleben, which was tried with success at Sebastopol, but has been wrongly conceived by the English engineers. The invitation of the Grand Duke to Osborne is explained by the desire to show the world that the French Court has no claim to monopolise, in a certain manner, the attentions of Russia, and every care

has been taken, during his flying visit to English soil, to remove the impression of himself and those about him that people in England are blind to what is going on in France. Lord Clarendon in particular is said to have spoken out very plainly, and expressed his poor opinion of Walewski and the French Court party in a manner which has excited surprise even in that quarter where the *nil admirari* has become a rule of life.

The efforts of the English Ministers to pave the way for a political understanding with Russia, have found shape during this visit in some remarkable declarations. Practically, however, it is only on the Chinese question that this revival of mutual confidence has hitherto made itself manifest. England has communicated Lord Elgin's instructions to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, and accompanied the communication of them with the request to support the mission at Pekin. The Russian Cabinet has sent a reply couched in friendly terms of thanks. They will most willingly support the efforts of England in favour of European trade and their fellow-Christians. Russia declines, however, to interfere in any way in the differences pending between the English Plenipotentiary and the Chinese Commissioner in Canton, and is not in a position to back up the wish of England to institute diplomatic relations with the Chinese Empire by accrediting a permanent British Ambassador in Pekin.

These remarks will suffice to show the political circumstances under which the Archduke Ferdinand Maximilian paid his visit to the English Court. Nowhere are personal sympathies and antipathies dominated more than in England by the politics of the day. It cannot, therefore, seem a fact of no importance, that for a long time no foreign Prince has been able to boast of such a personal success as the Austrian

Governor-General of the Lombardo-Venetian kingdom. His quiet, dignified demeanour, coupled with a rare amiability and power of conversation, has charmed the Queen, and, what is more, Prince Albert, who has expressed, not only orally but also in a letter to Lord Clarendon, his pleasure at the favourable impression made by his distinguished guest. Statesmen of all parties are unanimous in their admiration of him. What has surprised one even in this land of liberty is the want of reserve with which the Archduke proclaims his political views. Their decidedly Liberal colour explains his success. Thus the sober-minded Lord Aberdeen said to me, 'I have found the young man not only very intelligent, but also very Liberal; quite Liberal enough to my taste.' Himself a decided advocate of an alliance with England, the Archduke in his conversations with Lord Palmerston, Lord Clarendon, and Lord Derby, has elicited expressions of sympathy and support for the Austrian Government which ought not to be undervalued, even should all his words not be ratified at Vienna.

It is now being contemplated to give expression to the newly arranged understanding between Austria and England by promoting the Envoys on both sides to the rank of Ambassadors. That this intimacy between the two countries is watched nowhere with greater jealousy than in Paris, is obvious. Even the private visit of the French Emperor and Empress to Osborne, which has not been hailed here with any exaggerated joy, is regarded as a counter demonstration. At the same time, it is clear that the interview arranged between the French and Russian Emperors touches British nerves too closely not to have made Napoleon feel the necessity of preparing his English allies for the shock.

The French Emperor will seek, as he has sought, the pole

of his policy in the English alliance. The most recent successes of the Opposition in the French elections will only have strengthened this view. For the more palpably the symptoms of anti-Bonapartist agitation become prominent, the more need has Napoleon of the good will of England. Nor can it be denied that the latter, from the neglected condition of her coast defences, has sufficient reason to avoid an open rupture. She can only congratulate herself if the fatigues of the Crimean campaign have lulled to sleep awhile the warlike spirit of the French nation, at all times an uncertain factor in European politics. Even if, as many think, the present Anglo-French alliance is a mere farce, still the interests of both nations appear to render necessary its continuance. Anglo-Austrian and Franco-Russian sympathies will deserve for the present only a secondary consideration—'for the present' meaning till the time comes when events will make it necessary to replace the April treaty by a firmer combination. That it could ever be in England's interest to help to realise Walewski's dream of an Anglo-Franco-Russian alliance, statesmen of all parties will unanimously deny. How should the lion's share, always so carefully guarded, fall through such a grouping to the British Empire?

London: August 15, 1857.

The first two days of the interview at Osborne have remained without result. Lord Palmerston, who was invited there, together with Lord Clarendon, on the 6th, did not arrive till the evening of the 7th. He had by an oversight left the royal letter of invitation unopened on his overcrowded writing table, and had to be reminded of it by telegraph.

The change of views in the English Cabinet, which I have mentioned in my despatches, seems to have been mainly

brought about by Napoleon's private conversations with the two leading Ministers.

The decisive audience of Lord Palmerston took place in private on the night of the 7th. They did not separate till after two o'clock in the morning, and then without any prospect, it is said, of an understanding. In the course of the 8th, Persigny by his efforts succeeded in recommending for adoption as a compromise the well-known representation of the Six Powers to the Porte. People here were only too happy to ascribe the merit of the agreement to the most trusty adherent of the English alliance, and to lavish eulogies on Count Persigny at the expense of the less popular Count Walewski. Hard as it may have been to British pride to get over the undeniable humiliation, nevertheless delight at having solved the difficulties was the foremost feeling of the moment with Lord Clarendon as well as with Lord Palmerston.

As has been already pointed out, the experience gathered at Osborne has only strengthened the British statesmen in their wish to expedite the agreement with Russia, so desirable in the interests of general peace. My Russian colleague expressed himself highly satisfied with the conversations he had had during the last few days with Clarendon. The recognition of Prince Gortschakoff's moderation has led to confidential utterances about the best way and means of bringing about the *rapprochement* desired on both sides. The courier whom Count Chreptowitch sent to-day by way of Hull direct to St. Petersburg, takes over despatches which will be worthy of attention by the Russian Cabinet.

Count Chreptowitch had made no secret of stating, six months before, that, desirable as such an agreement appeared, Russia could not possibly take the initiative. In reminding Lord Clarendon of that statement, he described to him the

bad feeling prevailing against England. That feeling had struck its roots deep in Russia, and not all that had occurred since the conclusion of peace could lessen it. The consequences of this mutual distrust were manifested on the one side at Bolgrad, and on the other in Persia; and the latest crisis in Constantinople had been brought about by this unnatural state of tension. Lord Clarendon, without questioning the correctness of these remarks, contented himself with pointing out what readiness the British Cabinet had evinced to respond with confidence to the first signs of a more conciliatory disposition. That the Chinese affair was recognised on both sides as the starting-point of better relations, is shown by the fact that the confidential communication of Lord Elgin's instructions to St. Petersburg produced there the desired impression. On Count Chreptówitch's repeatedly declaring that he promised himself, nevertheless, no success, unless England unequivocally counteracted the mistrust still remaining in St. Petersburg, Lord Clarendon returned this remarkable answer: 'Soyez persuadé que je prendrai tout ce que vous venez de me dire en très-sérieuse considération. J'espère sous peu être en mesure de vous prouver que nous ferons de notre côté tout ce qui est en notre pouvoir pour rétablir nos rapports avec la Russie sur un pied plus satisfaisant.'

Lord Clarendon's conciliatory attitude is mainly due to his desire of avoiding the danger of a separate alliance between Russia and France. Even a satisfactory solution of the question of the Danubian Principalities is not to be thought of so long as that question serves as a pretext and provender for mutual rivalries.

CHAPTER XI.

LONDON.—1858.

Preparations for the Marriage of the Princess Royal—Lord and Lady Palmerston—A Morning Visit to Lady Palmerston—Orsini's Attempt on Napoleon—The India Bill—The Conspiracy Bill—Fall of Lord Palmerston's Ministry—Lord Derby Prime Minister—Persigny's Recall—Flying Visit to Ireland—Invitation of Prince George of Saxony to Windsor—Conversations with Napoleon and Walewski—Arrival of Prince George in England—Three Days at Windsor—Prince George's Visit to Lisbon—The Queen's Visits to Cherbourg and Babelsberg—Return to Lisbon to conclude the Marriage Treaty.

In England I found the Court engaged in preparations for the marriage of the Princess Royal (January 25). The greatest splendour was to be displayed at the wedding of the eldest daughter of the Queen. No less than thirty-five royal guests were expected, and it cost some trouble to lodge them all at Buckingham Palace.

In the midst of these preparations I did not fail to notice a change in the tone of public opinion. I discovered from my first interview with Mr. Disraeli, and my first visit to Lady Palmerston, the cause and meaning of the crisis which was threatening the existence of the Ministry.

Lady Palmerston was a remarkable woman, and her personal amiability and experience of the world have contributed in no small degree to strengthen the position of her husband. Englishwomen of rank, who have no occasion to trouble themselves like our German wives about their households, exercise, even though they may not belong to the so-called

femmes politiques, indirectly a very considerable influence upon public affairs. As a rule they are so completely one with their husbands, that the latter have no secrets from them, and yet run no risk of imprudent revelations. The wife of a Minister is first and foremost his private secretary. Considering the inconveniences caused by Blue-books and the freedom of the Press, State secrets are kept closer in London than anywhere else, whilst the most important public business is chiefly settled by confidential private notes, and only put into official shape later on. Now there are so many delicate questions, especially for a Prime Minister, that it would be dangerous to make them known to a private secretary, however dependable he might be. In such cases the Minister himself writes the letter, but before sending it off, gets his wife to make a copy for his private papers. Lady Palmerston, as well as Lady Derby, Lady Clarendon, Lady Russell, and others, all did this confidential work. Anyone who has any idea of the mass of business to be despatched, can understand that these ladies could have no time for idle talk and gossip, especially as they had also to answer and send off their numerous cards and invitations. Lord Palmerston himself had no leisure for social duties. His day was so occupied when Parliament was sitting, that he was accustomed to take only one meal. He rose at about nine o'clock, worked in his study till nearly noon, then drove to Downing Street, where he gave audiences, received his colleagues, and presided at Cabinet Councils, and afterwards, from four o'clock in the afternoon, often sat for twelve consecutive hours in the House of Commons. As leader of the House he was obliged always to be on the spot to answer questions and conduct the debate. At night, often in the early morning hours, the old gentleman would trudge home on foot, a half-

hour's walk, to breathe some fresh air after the heated atmosphere of the House. Nor did he rest at once when reaching home, for he never omitted, before going to bed, to write down with his own hand the usual report of the last sitting. This report had always to lie the next morning on the Queen's breakfast table. It was to the Prime Minister's interest to forestall the newspapers, and submit to the Queen without delay his own views about the proceedings of Parliament. Lady Palmerston spoke to me once about this unavoidable hardship in official life, and added naïvely, 'I would far rather that my husband were only Foreign Minister or Home Secretary, for since he is become Prime Minister I see nothing of him. He never comes to bed till four or five o'clock. . . .' This complaint came from her heart, for since Philemon and Baucis there can hardly have been found a more devoted couple so advanced in years. Palmerston was as full of loving attentions to his wife as the youngest lover. She was at once a mother and wife in her care of him. He never knew whether he should dine at home or not. She looked after everything. She generally held her receptions during the season on Saturday evenings. Although the old lady could command the services of sons and daughters, grandsons and granddaughters, she herself always added with trembling hand the name of the invited guest to the printed form, 'Lady Palmerston at home.' The best society was to be met at her receptions, and they were much in request. Woe to the member of his own party who had spoken or voted against Lord Palmerston in the House; he was unrelentingly punished by receiving no invitation; nor was his name replaced on the list till he had thought better of his disobedience. Lady Palmerston's dinners were excellent, and rivalled those of Rothschild. Only you had to beware of going there too

early, as you ran the risk in that case of finding neither the master nor mistress of the house in the drawing-room. Once on entering the house at half-past eight o'clock I met Lord Palmerston just going out for a ride before dinner on his old grey horse in Rotten Row. This grey horse, familiar to all Londoners, was the despair of the old lady, for she herself had four grey carriage horses, and feared lest people should think that her husband rode one of them.

A morning call on Lady Palmerston was often more instructive than studying the newspapers. Her *salon* was the head quarters of the Liberal party, and the truest barometer when Parliamentary storms were brewing.

During the recess Lord Palmerston had appointed to the Privy Seal a man who, though undoubtedly clever, was then somewhat unpopular.

On visiting Lady Palmerston one morning in January after an absence of several months, I found her alone with old Lord Brougham, well known in connection with the trial of Queen Caroline. An odd man was this former Lord Chancellor! Notwithstanding his great age he was still esteemed one of England's most able lawyers, and no one, with the exception of Lord Palmerston, had so fine an instinct for detecting the current of public opinion. His age gave him the right to be outspoken, and he liked to call a spade a spade. My entrance evidently interrupted a sermon he was preaching to the old friend of his youth. However, he did not allow himself to be disturbed, and continued his recital of the reasons which had damaged Lord Palmerston's popularity and placed his Ministry in the most evident danger.

'As I have often said to you before, Lord Palmerston is still always too young, too rash. How could it ever have occurred to him to give this Lord C—— a seat in his Cabinet?

The House of Commons could never approve of such a step. I tell you beforehand, the Ministry is damned.'

In a few blunt words Lord Brougham proceeded to explain his meaning. For the first time Lady Palmerston now realised the danger, and seemed so frightened, that Lord Brougham and I thought it better to shorten our visit. But I knew what had gone home to her. The days of the Ministry were numbered, and the only thing I was doubtful about was whether they would fall on a home or a foreign question.

On January 14, an event happened in Paris which was destined to put to the severest test the already loosened relations between the two Western Powers. Orsini, an Italian Carbonaro, a member of a secret society, to which the present Emperor of the French himself once belonged, had attempted to assassinate his crowned fellow-conspirator by throwing a bombshell under his carriage. The attempt failed, but it cost some victims, and aroused in France a storm of indignation against the 'perfide Albion' which was giving a shelter to regicides. Cool and courageous as the Emperor had shown himself in the Opera immediately after the deed, still his confidence in his star appeared to be shaken. People in Paris lost their heads, and the 'Moniteur' published some congratulatory addresses from the army, as indiscreet as they were absurd, which preached a war of revenge against England. The British papers, as would have been expected, did not fail to answer the French colonels. In England as in France, the passions of the public were roused to a serious pitch.

Objectionable as might be the manner in which political refugees of all nations abused the British right of asylum, still, in this particular instance, the English police had actually done more than the French to prevent the crime in question. Sir

Richard Mayne assured me that he had given timely information to the *préfet de police* in Paris of Orsini's having left England with the intention of going by way of Belgium to Paris, and there attempting the Emperor's life. This report, he said, had contained all the particulars known to the London police, such as the description of the offender, the date of his departure, and other details. Sir Richard was a thoroughly honourable man, and I have no reason to doubt the truth of what he told me. Now Orsini, as the examination proved, did actually come to Paris by rail through Belgium. The French detectives, who, in consequence of the information received from England, examined for a whole week all the trains arriving from Belgium, not only let this Italian slip through their fingers, but favoured him with ten days or a fortnight's time in Paris to mature his plans for the attempt. It was unjust, therefore, to accuse England of complicity in a crime which, if not excused, was at any rate explained by the youthful vagaries of the Emperor. Every member of a secret society knows that betrayal will be punished with death. Just because Napoleon III. was reminded in such a sanguinary manner of his youthful oath, the attempt of Orsini has had such fatal consequences for him, his country, and his neighbours. In spite of the seemingly victorious campaign of 1859, which was provoked by Orsini rather than by Cavour, the decline of the Second Empire can be dated from this 14th of January.

Parliament was resumed, after an adjournment from the previous December, on February 4. The question of chief interest, the transfer of the Government of India from the East India Company to the Crown, seemed likely at first to be solved in a surprisingly favourable way for the Ministry. Although the capture of Delhi appeared to promise the speedy

suppression of the mutiny, the struggle was still maintained with the utmost bitterness. Nevertheless, an amendment which proposed to wait for the restoration of peace before throwing the Company overboard, was rejected by an unexpectedly large majority (318 to 173) in favour of the introduction of Lord Palmerston's India Bill. But 'les jours se suivent et ne se ressemblent pas.' Lord Palmerston, a conqueror on the 18th, suffered the next night an unexpected defeat.

Under pressure from Persigny, the Premier had been anxious to put an end to the clamour on the other side of the Channel. Accordingly, on February 9 he brought in his Conspiracy Bill, which proposed, with obvious reference to Orsini's attempt, to amend the criminal law by making conspiracies to murder, concocted on English soil, punishable as felony instead of misdemeanour. The Bill had already passed a first reading by a large majority (299 to 99), when the newspapers published a pungent despatch of Walewski. Without giving Clarendon time to make a statement about this unfriendly effusion of the French Minister, the Radical enemies of Lord Palmerston spread the report that he had been bullied into bringing in the Conspiracy Bill by Walewski's despatch. The Ministry, they said, were endeavouring to sacrifice British liberties, in order to take the edge off French menaces. The Conservative party were too well alive to their responsibility, to proceed to a direct attack in so delicate a question. But an independent member was found, Mr. Milner Gibson, who moved an amendment on the second reading, censuring the Government for not having replied to the despatch. This amendment, which was supported by the Conservatives, Peelites, and Radicals, was carried by an unexpectedly large majority (19 votes) in a full House. Palmerston defended his

conduct with unusual violence, and forgot himself so far as to threaten his Radical opponents with his clenched fist. The vote, however, left him no alternative but to resign.

Although Lord Derby himself had taken no part in this Radical 'move,' he could not, as leader of the most numerous party that had voted against the Ministers, decline the task of forming a new Cabinet. All attempts to strengthen himself by enlisting more experienced allies, proved fruitless. The Peelites, as well as Lord Grey, declined to become the colleagues of the Tory leader. No one entertained fewer illusions than Lord Derby himself as to the possibility of forming a lasting Government with the forces at his disposal. Nevertheless, things promised well so far, that Lord John Russell, a friend of Lord Derby from his youth, secretly supported him, in order to prevent Lord Palmerston's return to the Premiership. The thankless duty imposed on the Conservatives, of governing in the face of an overwhelming majority in the House of Commons, was sweetened by the thought that they were discharging a patriotic duty, training their leaders to business, and accustoming the nation to have confidence in them. Lord Derby's statesmanlike programme, which he announced to the House on March 1, immediately after his accession to office, had a negative rather than a positive character, and met with deserved approval from its practical unpretentiousness. The question of Parliamentary reform was postponed to the next Session; the Conspiracy Bill, which had been virtually condemned by the House of Commons, was withdrawn; and the prospect was given not only of suppressing by vigorous action the mutiny in India, but also of speedily solving the question of government in that country.

Lord Palmerston's supporters found it difficult to accustom

themselves to the thought that he was no longer in office. The Liberals regarded themselves in some degree as the heirs in fee simple of power. Persigny was one of the most passionate partisans of the defeated Minister. He had completely lost his bearings, and behaved with unparalleled want of tact. In vain did his colleagues remind him that we diplomatists have no right to mix ourselves up in domestic questions, and take sides with this or that party in England. Persigny continued to receive his instructions from Palmerston, and informed him of all that Lord Derby and Lord Malmesbury confided to the French Ambassador. Such conduct could not possibly remain unnoticed, the less so as Persigny naïvely boasted of his indiscretions to the new Ministers. The consequence was that Lord Malmesbury conducted the indispensable negotiations through Lord Cowley. Walewski, an enemy of Persigny, entered into them with pleasure, and a *modus vivendi* was arranged behind the French Ambassador's back. Offended at this, Persigny tendered his resignation, in the hope that it would not be accepted, but occasion the downfall of Walewski. But it turned out otherwise. The Emperor, enlightened by Lord Cowley, and displeased with the irritable tone of Persigny's despatches to himself, approved the resignation of his compromising confidant. The latter, to his intense surprise, received from Walewski the laconic telegram, 'Votre démission est acceptée.' Marshal Pélissier, a *persona grata* at the English Court, was Persigny's successor.

About this time I received instructions to ascertain, before the departure of Prince George of Saxony, that there were no hereditary diseases, such as insanity and epilepsy, in the Portuguese Royal Family. I was in London, and not in Lisbon. About so delicate a matter I could not possibly write to Portugal, nor ask Count Lavradio.

I preferred going to Sir Richard Pakenham, who had represented England at the Portuguese Court for many years during the reign of Queen Maria da Gloria. Sir Richard was now living in Ireland on his estate. The journey was a long one; I took nearly twenty-four hours in getting there. It was still too early in the year to see green Erin in her spring attire. Everything wore the aspect of desolation and poverty. Grey, badly cultivated fields, alternated with snow-covered pasturages. The tumble-down huts of the ragged peasantry presented a most melancholy contrast to the culture and luxurious prosperity of England. It seemed, after I had left St. George's Channel behind me, as if I had been thrown back into a distant age, some centuries ago, or cast upon a desert island. Dublin itself, of which Irishmen are so proud, resembles a dirty provincial town, rather French than English. And then Mullingar! There civilisation stops entirely with the railway. After a journey of several hours, a jaunting car brought me safely to my destination. The small but tasteful farmhouse seemed to me a real Paradise. Sir Richard received me most cordially. He told me that in consequence of the great interest taken by Queen Victoria in the numerous confinements of the late Queen Maria, it had always been his duty to ascertain all details connected with the events. All the children had been born thoroughly healthy and strong, and had been nursed and brought up with the utmost care. I left him with my mind entirely at ease, and by noon the next day was again in London.

My Sovereign was satisfied with the information I had thus gained, and soon after I received a command by telegraph to inquire whether and when it would be agreeable to the Queen to receive a visit from Prince George. I went to Prince Albert, and laid the telegram before him.

'Tell me honestly, what brings Prince George here? Does he wish to see us or London?'

'His wish is to wait upon the Queen and your Royal Highness, and to know when it would be agreeable to the Queen to receive him. If at the same time an opportunity occurs of showing him something of London, I will do so with pleasure.'

The Prince rang and asked for an almanac.

'Then he will be in Paris at the end of March? On the 2nd of April is the confirmation of the Prince of Wales. It is no use inviting a Roman Catholic Prince to that. On the 9th, you say, the Brazil steamer goes to Lisbon. That suits admirably. Please telegraph that we shall be glad to welcome the Prince at Windsor from the 5th to the 9th of April. He can come to London, if he likes, a few days earlier, when you will be able to show him what you please.'

All was, therefore, practically settled in three minutes. The way and manner of doing it was characteristic of the Queen's husband. He was completely master of the house, however much he concealed it from the public.

As soon as I heard Prince George had arrived in Paris, I went thither to wait upon him.

I did not omit to tell Lord Malmesbury of this trip, and to ask whether he had any commissions for me in Paris.

'No special commissions. But tell Walewski how things are here, and what a legacy we have come in for. Persigny is quite at loggerheads with his chief, and no longer writes a word to him. Walewski will therefore be glad to hear the truth from you. Tell the Emperor my sentiments towards him are unchanged. But if he asks me to pass Palmerston's Conspiracy Bill, I would far rather he asked me for the moon. He would then at least see the impossibility of the thing at once.'

I found Prince George at the Pavillon Marsan. He was delighted with his cordial reception, and invited me to dine with him. I afterwards went on to Countess Walewska, who received that evening.

As soon as Walewski saw me, he took me aside, and, without troubling himself about his other guests, questioned me as to what had happened and was happening in London. He literally knew nothing but what the newspapers had said, and openly confessed to me that Persigny had concealed from him all that I told him.

The next morning I received an invitation to dine with the Emperor. I felt interested to see this improvised Court, of which I had heard so many contradictory accounts. Despite the correctness of the service, the tinsel of the *parvenu* household shone through all. The elegance was somewhat forced and unnatural, and the tone and manners of the showily dressed ladies reminded one of the novelty of the position which they were not brought up to. The whole had a theatrical appearance. The Empress and Princess Mathilde spoke to me of the favourable impression made upon them by Prince George.

The Emperor honoured me after dinner with a long conversation. He was evidently anxious about the future of the Anglo-French alliance. At Lord Malmesbury's wish I told him the true cause of Palmerston's defeat.

'Il y a longtemps que vous êtes en Angleterre?' asked the Emperor.

'Cinq ans, Sire.'

'Alors vous avez eu le temps d'étudier ce curieux pays. Ici, en France, je suis le seul à le connaître. On y est toujours comme à bord d'un grand vaisseau au milieu des brouillards et à la merci des tempêtes. Le branle-bas sonne

à tout moment. Il y a un mouvement perpétuel et l'on se croit toujours à la veille d'une révolution. Mais en regardant de près on s'aperçoit qu'il n'en est rien et que le bon navire marche et avance toujours.'

These words were remarkable, as just then public opinion in France was more excited than ever against the 'perfide Albion.'

'Dites bien des choses de ma part,' Napoleon continued, 'à mon vieil ami Malmesbury, et dites-lui aussi que je ne lui demande pas la lune. Si j'ai demandé à Palmerston de remplir une lacune de leur législation criminelle par une mesure mettant les souverains étrangers à l'abri des trames des assassins qui abusent de l'hospitalité anglaise en se faisant passer pour des réfugiés politiques, ce n'est pas pour moi, c'est dans l'intérêt de l'Angleterre, dans l'intérêt de notre alliance, que je l'ai demandé. Je n'ai pas besoin des Anglais pour me défendre. Je suis un homme providentiel. J'ai une mission à remplir, et tant que la Providence aura besoin de moi elle saura me protéger. La nation que je suis appelé à gouverner ne connaît pas l'Angleterre, ignore ses institutions et n'apprécie pas comme moi les intérêts réciproques que protège notre alliance. J'aurais donc désiré que les ministres de la Reine et le Parlement donnassent à la France une preuve évidente de la valeur qu'ils attachent à ma vie et à ma personne. L'alliance, je le répète, c'est moi! S'ils ne le comprennent pas, tant pis pour eux et pour nous. Les deux peuples ne se connaissent pas et ne s'aiment guère.'

It is plain that Napoleon had already accommodated himself to the inevitable. If he was able to give his resignation a gloss of dignity, he had to thank Lord Malmesbury for it, who had suggested to him, through Lord Cowley, what the Emperor gave me as his own view.

Prince George on his arrival at Dover was received on behalf of the Court by Colonel Ponsonby, who had been deputed to attend on his Royal Highness during his visit. On April 5, in response to the Queen's invitation, we went to Windsor Castle.

The Queen and Prince Albert vied in making the visit as agreeable as possible to their guest. Numerous invitations were always issued to dinner, as the Queen thought it useful to make the young Prince acquainted with the most interesting personages of the day. The Duke of Cambridge came the first evening, and Persigny the next. The latter shortly before dinner tendered his letters of recall. Poor Persigny was quite knocked down. I tried in vain to console him with the hope that we should soon see him again. 'Oh,' he sighed, 'ce n'est pas pour moi que je regrette ce départ. Je serai plus utile à Paris que je ne puis l'être ici en ce moment. Mais ma femme s'était tellement attachée à ce pays qu'elle est au désespoir de nous voir le quitter. Elle en fera une maladie, la pauvre enfant.'

Busily engaged as was Prince Albert, he would not allow anyone but himself to show Prince George the treasures of art which give such a peculiar character to Windsor Castle. It is incredible what the Prince Consort has collected and arranged there in so short a time. To say nothing of the famous photographs of the world-renowned sketches of Raphael, he had also brought together an almost complete collection of copperplate engravings and etchings of contemporary portraits representing the princes of the various Saxon houses. Several hundred miniatures, suitably displayed, showed the taste of this refined Prince.

On the third and last day of our visit, the Ministers then in office had been invited to dinner. It was my duty to tell

the Prince beforehand something about the personages whom I had to introduce to him.

'Lord Derby,' I said, 'will dine here this evening. He has only been Prime Minister a short time, and will probably not remain so much longer. The influence which he exercises is independent, however, of his official position. He is the bearer of an ancient historical name—the fourteenth Earl of Derby—if not the best, at least the most finished debater in Parliament, and one of the ablest English scholars, as is shown by his masterly translations from the German and Greek. His estates secure him a princely income. A Whig in his youth, he was compelled to leave his party, who had gone over too much to the Left, and to form out of the old Tory party, shattered by the secession of Sir Robert Peel, a new one, which is still wanting in a trained general staff. Nevertheless, he has always a strong majority in the House of Lords at his back, whether in office or in opposition, and in the House of Commons he can reckon on a formidable minority of from two hundred and fifty to three hundred votes. Though a martyr to gout, the national infirmity of English statesmen, this talented man is most charming in society, and enjoys the most unequivocal popularity among all classes. His friends accuse him of a want of ambition, and certainly he seems to prefer the more comfortable position of a leader of the Opposition to the irksome duties of Prime Minister. 'We are grown too rich,' he once said to me. 'Our private business takes up too much of our time. We cannot any longer, as our forefathers did, take long journeys abroad and study the affairs of the Continent, and then, like them, devote ourselves entirely to the State.' His remark contained much truth, and mainly explained the progress of democracy in England. But however that may be, it is still the large land-

owners who have the power. The soil of the United Kingdom belongs altogether to about ten thousand persons. If any one of these, at the head of a powerful party, not only has a well settled fortune, but surpasses most of his contemporaries in intellect, wit, and cultivation, he acquires at once in this free, but essentially aristocratic kingdom, a personal influence more important in truth than that enjoyed by the absolute monarch of a great and bureaucratically governed country. For the personal influence of an individual has naturally the narrower scope and limits, the larger the country over which he rules. If anyone, therefore, were to ask Lord Derby whether he would change his position for that of the Emperor of Russia or the Emperor of Austria, he would say decidedly not, and, from his own point of view, would be quite right in so saying.'

At the dinner table I sat next the Queen. She was pleased to say to me, 'I have avoided hitherto mentioning anything to Prince George about his visit to Lisbon.'

'That is very kind of your Majesty. You would have embarrassed the Prince, for neither his father nor he himself will listen to a diplomatically arranged marriage. There is, therefore, no preconcerted agreement whatever. The Prince's visit has no object beyond that of giving him an opportunity of seeing the Infanta, of whom I have spoken to him. The King leaves him entire freedom of choice.'

'That is right,' said the Queen; 'and I am glad to hear it. We like the Prince extremely, and his noble bearing will certainly not fail to create an equally good impression in Lisbon.'

On April 9 we embarked at Southampton. The Bay of Biscay, so dreaded by seafarers, was favourable to us, and on the fourth morning we cast anchor in Lisbon harbour. Every preparation had been made in the Palace of Necesidades for

our reception, and the Prince soon found himself quite at home. The betrothal followed in a few days, on the 17th. We travelled back through Spain and France. I accompanied the Prince to Dresden. It was there settled that I should go again to Lisbon in December, in order to conclude the treaty of marriage and make all the necessary preparations for the nuptials.

I was in London again at the end of the Session. Lord Derby's Ministry had made themselves tolerably secure after having thrown overboard Lord Ellenborough, 'the white elephant,' and freed themselves from the compromising extravagances of that talented and energetic, but too passionate Minister. Lord Malmesbury had returned satisfied from Babelsberg, whither he had accompanied the Queen and the Prince Consort on a visit to their newly married daughter. He had succeeded in re-establishing somewhat better relations with his old patron, Napoleon. However, the Queen's visit to Cherbourg gave rise to fresh excitement and the fear that, in the event of a rupture with France, the maritime power, and especially the coast defences, of England would not afford adequate protection. Prince Albert also had found the Emperor of the French very reserved and taciturn at Cherbourg. The report of his secret interview with Count Cavour at Plombières was not exactly calculated to put a rose-coloured aspect on the future.

Parliament was prorogued on August 2. I had, therefore, full time to elaborate in Dresden the instructions I had imposed upon myself for conducting the negotiations in Lisbon, and which were approved without more ado. It seemed to me not superfluous to seek the support of Prince Albert for the successful execution of my mission. I returned, therefore, to London in the beginning of December, and waited on

the Prince. He invited me to spend a night at Windsor, where there was time and opportunity to talk over the necessary steps.

On December 9, I embarked at Southampton together with Herr von Zobel, the Councillor of Legation who had been attached to me, and arrived three days afterwards in Lisbon. The negotiations themselves presented no difficulty, and were only delayed by the critical position in which the Portuguese Government was then situated.

CHAPTER XII.

PRINCE METTERNICH.[1]

Prince Metternich in Dresden—My Interviews with the Chancellor—His Visit to the Marcolini Palace—His Account of his long and decisive Audience of Napoleon I. in 1813—Autobiographical Reminiscences—His Judgment on Napoleon III. and on English Statesmen—The British Constitution a Game of Whist *à Trois*—The Game as played by the Crown—Disraeli—A Letter for Him—Prince Metternich's Memoirs—His Policy—Reasons of his Fall in 1848.

In October 1858, a few months before his death, Prince Metternich, the Austrian Chancellor, paid a visit of several days at Dresden to his son, Prince Richard, then accredited at the Saxon Court.

I happened just at that time to be in Saxony, on leave of absence from my diplomatic duties in London. I had been introduced eleven years before to Prince Metternich in Vienna, shortly before his retirement, but in my subordinate position as Secretary to the Legation I had not then made his closer acquaintance. The old gentleman remembered most kindly our former meeting, on my greeting him now in the drawing-room of his daughter-in-law in Dresden.

[1] The following chapter had been taken out from the original manuscript of these Memoirs, and published as an introduction to a previous book by the same author: *Berlin und Wien in den Jahren* 1845–52; *Politische Privatbriefe des damaligen K. Sächs. Legations-Secretärs C. F. Vitzthum von Eckstädt.* Second edition. Stuttgart, 1886. It is reinserted here in its right place in chronological order. A Prussian critic, very hostile to Austria, says: 'This is a picture of perfect truth . . . and one of the finest pieces of modern historical literature.' See *Preussische Jahrbücher*, November 1886, p. 489.—Ed.

Prince Metternich that day had just been to the Marcolini Palace, where forty-five years before he had had that memorable interview with the Emperor Napoleon which decided Austria's accession to the Russo-Prussian alliance and, as a further consequence, the fate of Europe. This palace, built in the suburbs of Dresden by the favourite of Frederick Augustus I., had served as the French Emperor's head quarters in 1813, and was still standing, though in course of time it had been converted into a hospital. The room in which the interview had taken place was almost unaltered, and the large fine apartment was now used by the doctors as a consultation chamber.

Prince Metternich found the place, therefore, after forty-five years, almost the same as if he had left it the day before. This circumstance may have helped not a little to refresh, as it did in a most remarkable manner, his extraordinary memory. The interview is now well known, as Prince Metternich's report of it to the Emperor Francis, dated June 26, 1813, has since been published.[1] In 1858 the only existing account of it was the one given by M. Thiers, whose 'Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire' has lost to some extent, in the fifteenth and sixteenth volumes, thanks to the information given by Prince Metternich, that romantic colouring which Guizot used to ridicule by declaring, 'Je n'ai pas le temps de lire des romans.' But the liveliness with which the ultra-octogenarian statesman repeated in the drawing-room of the Princess Pauline the main incidents of that nine hours' interview, the accuracy with which he reproduced the *ipsissima verba* of the French monarch, and the tone in which he emphasised his own replies—nothing of all this can be realised

[1] See Metternich's posthumous papers, vol. ii. pp. 461–62. Vienna, 1880.

either from Metternich's own report,[1] or from the narrative of Thiers. The whole episode was represented as graphically as a play of Shakespeare at one of Tieck's recitations. All the chief incidents had so impressed themselves, down to the smallest details, upon the mind of the narrator, that his hearers seemed to see Napoleon himself standing before them, and to be present at the whole scene. Nothing was forgotten, not even the moment when the wrathful Emperor threw his since historical hat upon the floor, to see whether Prince Metternich was minded to pick it up. 'I let the hat lie where it was,' said the Prince when relating the incident; 'but the glove, which he flung down as a moral challenge to my Emperor, I picked up; he knew me too well to deceive himself on that point.'

The Prince narrated, with an indescribable smile and visible delight, two of his most telling answers. When the Imperial actor remarked that sentimentalities produced no impression, the *commediante*—to borrow Pius VII.'s expression—changed into the *tragediante*, and he exclaimed, 'Eh bien, puisque vous voulez la guerre, vous l'aurez! Je ferai la guerre, une guerre d'extermination!' Prince Metternich replied calmly, 'Permettez-moi, Sire, d'ouvrir les portes et les fenêtres, afin que tout le monde vous entende; vous jugerez vous-même de l'effet que vos paroles produiront sur vos maréchaux.' And when the Emperor thereupon reproached his marshals and the French people generally for their ingratitude, and exclaimed, 'J'ai toujours ménagé le sang français, et quand il fallait sacrifier des hommes, c'étaient les Polonais et les Allemands que j'employais,' the Prince bowed and said coldly, 'Je vous remercie pour les Allemands, Sire!'

[1] Metternich's posthumous papers, vol. i. pp. 150–57.

The Prince repeated with especial satisfaction his parting words on this occasion. On his passage through the antechamber after the interview was ended, the marshals and generals there assembled thronged round him, each of them anxious to know whether the result of this long audience was to be war or peace. The Austrian Minister remained mute, and his impassive stony face made even the most curious keep silence. Berthier, Prince of Neufchâtel and Marshal of the Palace, then the Emperor's bosom friend, and, perhaps, the only man who had any influence over him, accompanied the Prince to his carriage and entreated him to tell him honestly, as they were alone, how he had found the Emperor. 'I did not speak a word,' said the Prince to us, 'till I had taken my seat in the carriage, and the carriage door was shut. I then said four words to Berthier, which were prophetic, "C'est un homme perdu!"' The air of triumph with which Metternich repeated this answer is not to be described.

While the young people were assembled in the next room round the piano, where the Princess Pauline, accompanied by her husband, was singing her *chansons* in her well-known charming manner, I had a *tête-à-tête* with the Chancellor, which revealed to me more of his character and personality than all I had ever heard or read about him. He narrated to me the history of his life in a manner which impressed the stamp of truth on every word he uttered.

'I was compelled,' he said, 'against my will to busy myself with politics. My inclinations and, perhaps, my talents disposed me to study nature, but circumstances did not allow me to devote myself to my favourite science. Already in 1793 my father, who was then entrusted with the administration of our provinces in the Netherlands, sent me to London; I had to negotiate there with Pitt about the first Subsidy

treaty. As I married shortly afterwards, I would much rather have remained on my father's estates in Bohemia. But he found me too young, and thought it necessary to recommend me to follow, at least for some years, a diplomatic career. The choice was given me between three embassies. I chose that at Dresden, being the nearest to our Bohemian estates. Two years afterwards, circumstances again obliged me to go to Berlin, where a more active man was wanted. I failed to induce Prussia to take part in the war which, in concert with Russia, we declared in 1805 against Napoleon. The disastrous result of that war disgusted me with politics more than ever. I was told that it was intended to send me to St. Petersburg. I had almost made up my mind not to go and get frozen in there, but to decline the post and quit the diplomatic service. With this intention, I went to the Emperor Francis, who had summoned me to Vienna. The Emperor received me very kindly, and asked me whether I knew what was required of me. "They want to send me to St. Petersburg," I replied, "but ——" I was going to add, "I beg your Majesty graciously to excuse me, for the climate does not suit either me or my wife," when the Emperor interrupted me and remarked with a smile, "St. Petersburg indeed! No, you must go to Paris as ambassador, and as quickly as possible! The Emperor Napoleon has asked for you!"

'This was certainly a most unexpected change. It is "curieux" (a favourite word of his), I have known a good deal in my life, but why the Emperor Napoleon should have asked for me just then, is a riddle to me still.'

I could have solved this riddle for the Prince, but I preferred not to interrupt him. The thing was very plain; Metternich had had as his colleague in Dresden the Marquis de Moustier, father of the late Foreign Minister of Napoleon III.

Moustier had been one of Metternich's intimate friends, and happened to have been removed to Berlin at the same time as Prince, then Count, Metternich. The ties formed between the two ambassadors had not been severed by the war. After peace was concluded, Napoleon asked Moustier whether he could name an Austrian diplomatist who was discreet, unprejudiced, and not a Francophobist. 'Ask for Metternich,' was Moustier's reply; 'I have never had a more amiable colleague either in Dresden or Berlin. In spite of the war, we remained the best of friends, and saw each other daily.'

'Accordingly I went,' continued Prince Metternich in his autobiography, 'in my thirty-second year as ambassador to Paris. It was our most important post, and it is as if Providence had appointed me to it, to give me an opportunity of studying the man whom it was afterwards my mission to overthrow. Napoleon had great qualities. He personified the Revolution which he had professedly subdued. His intellect could not dazzle me, he was no statesman. I studied him and him alone, and soon discovered the petty weaknesses and pitiful defects of the man. Why he took to me, I do not know. He was fond of talking with me in private, and often told me things which he kept secret from others; indeed, even in his moments of passion he remained friendly to me. Thus in the year 1809, before he ordered the police to conduct me across the frontier, he had had the well-known scene with me in the "Cercle" in the presence of the whole Court. Immediately after it, he sent Champagny, the Foreign Minister, to me, to let me know that the Emperor had only talked to the gallery, I was not to take it as addressed to myself. "Monsieur," I replied to the astonished Champagny, "dites à votre Empereur que je ne l'ai jamais pris au sérieux."

'It was not, however, until during the longer visit which I

paid to Paris, when Minister of Foreign Affairs, after Napoleon's marriage in 1810 with the Archduchess Maria Louisa, that I had an opportunity of gaining a thorough knowledge of the man. He loaded me with courtesies, frequently spoke to me of the happiness of his new marriage, and begged me to call on the Empress whenever I pleased; he had given the necessary orders to receive me.

'A few days before leaving Paris to show the Empress the newly acquired provinces in the Netherlands, he invited me to accompany him on the journey. I declined the invitation, and told him quite frankly that the cession of those provinces was still too recent an occurrence to allow me to be seen there in his company. He begged me then to go with him at least as far as Compiègne. We arrived there in the evening, and after dinner sat for some time at the tea table. The Empress was fatigued, and retired shortly after ten o'clock. I was anxious to do the same, when Napoleon exclaimed, "Metternich, êtes-vous aussi un de ces sept-coucheurs? Restez donc encore un peu, et causons." He then began to pace up and down *more suo* in the long gallery at Compiègne, and told me *ab ovo* the whole history of his life. You will never guess what his real object was. He was anxious to prove to me, with all the exuberance of his rhetoric, that the Bonapartes had always been more distinguished and respected in the island of Corsica than the Pozzo di Borgos. Why this conqueror of the world should have been at the pains to convince me of this, I have never yet understood. But what I did perfectly understand were the weaknesses which this provincial *parvenu* then revealed. The mask that he wore before the world, dropped down, and I studied, without his suspecting it, all the pettinesses of his character. I seriously believe that nobody knew him better than I did; and this knowledge stood

me in good stead, as you may suppose, when it came to overthrowing him from his pedestal. In the course of that night —for it was daybreak before our conversation ended—I had learned more from his own lips than I did during the years I had been watching him. And in that other interview in the Marcolini Palace, which lasted even longer, my best answers were those which were suggested to me by the recollection of that night at Compiègne.'

Another evening, when I happened to be alone with the Prince, our conversation turned on Napoleon III. The attentions shown by the latter to Prince Richard, when *attaché* to the Austrian Embassy in Paris, appeared to have biassed the judgment of the veteran statesman. At any rate, it was a more favourable one than I expected. Personally, to my knowledge, he was not acquainted with the Emperor. 'He is a power,' remarked Prince Metternich, 'that must be taken into account. But he forgets that a man cannot be Emperor *par la grâce de Dieu* and *par la volonté nationale* at one and the same time. That is a *contradictio in adjecto.* He must take his choice—to grasp the reins of government either as the heir of Napoleon I. or as the elected candidate of universal suffrage. This contradiction will cause his downfall. I shall not live to see it, but remember my words. This Bonaparte has built nothing that will last.'

A few weeks later I heard the same prophecy at Buckingham Palace from the lips of Prince Albert, and it struck me as remarkable that the two political antipodes, the Conservative Prince Metternich and the Liberal Prince Albert, should agree almost to the letter in their estimate of Napoleon III. 'He is no philosopher,' said Prince Albert, 'or he would have understood that no sovereign can owe his crown at once to hereditary succession and universal suffrage. This contra-

diction is bound to be the ruin, I don't say of himself personally—perhaps he is destined to die an Emperor in his bed—but of his system, his dynasty. He has built nothing lasting; he is only a meteor—no fixed star.'

To revert, however, to Prince Metternich. He talked to me also that evening a great deal about England, and the different generations of English statesmen with whom he had had to deal since 1793.

'What is called the British Constitution,' he said, 'is like a whist party *à trois*. The dummy is public opinion. The House of Commons has now for many years been holding this dummy. The Crown and the House of Lords have, therefore, been obliged to play against it—a game which has always its difficulties. I at least have invariably preferred to play with the dummy. So, also, I have always liked better to have to do with the Radicals than with the Liberals. The former know what they want; the latter do not, and, therefore, go on making one mistake after another. The House of Lords has lost many a trick. I must admit, however, that the Crown's hand has not been played so well for a long time as it has been of late years.'

When, shortly afterwards, I was sitting next the Queen at the royal dinner table, I did not forget to amuse her Majesty with these remarks of Metternich's.

Altogether, the Prince observed a noteworthy decline in the statesmanship, and especially in the energy, of England, and declared that the English ministers of his youth had been far more able and influential than those of our time. This gave me an opportunity of reminding him that there was one among those living at present who always spoke with genuine veneration of Prince Metternich, and liked to subscribe himself his 'faithful scholar'—Benjamin Disraeli. The Prince nodded

approvingly, and remarked that he shared my view, and considered him the foremost among the present leaders of the British nation.

The Earl of Beaconsfield, as everybody knows, did not belie this estimate.

On my taking leave of him that evening, Prince Metternich told me he would give me a letter—a *billet de matin*, as he expressed it—for Disraeli. I received this letter the next morning, but as my return to London was delayed, I entrusted it a few days afterwards to one of my colleagues who was passing through Dresden on his way back to England.

Long after the Prince's death, I received in 1866 an invitation from Disraeli to Hughenden Manor. After lunch the rain prevented us from taking a walk or drive, and my amiable host took me to an old writing table containing a mass of autographs which he had thought worth preserving. 'I happen to have here,' he said, 'Prince Metternich's last letter which you brought to me from him.' We rummaged about the papers, which, he said, he must leave his heirs to arrange, having no time to sort them himself, and found, among others, some autograph letters of King Leopold and Prince Albert. The last letter he had received from the Prince referred to the American cable, a project on behalf of which he was most anxious to interest the leader of the Opposition. At length I found also Prince Metternich's letter, and as it began by mentioning me, I understood why Disraeli took me for the bearer. This letter, omitting the first portion, has been published in Metternich's 'Memoirs,'[1] probably from a copy kept by the Prince. The foregoing remarks may explain its origin.

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[1] Vol. viii. p. 419.

More than twenty years after Metternich's last visit to Dresden, which I have described above, the filial affection of his eldest son caused him to publish in a biographical form, from the papers left behind by his father, the chief incidents of his private life and his active official career. These 'Memoirs' do not appear to have met in our stirring time with the attention they deserve. This, however, is not to be wondered at, for, in fact, they could scarcely be expected to contain any new material.

By his associates Prince Metternich was always considered an accomplished and highly bred man of the world. He was known also to be a loyal, prudent, and even genial husband and father. To his three wives, whom he lived to bury, he made life as easy and pleasant as was possible. He considered it, as is known, the greatest misfortune that can happen to a person to be born a woman. His private letters and the diary of the Princess Melanie teach us how hard he tried to make his three wives forget that misfortune. Though sorely afflicted by the loss of several beloved children, he was always the truest friend of those who were left to him, all of whom clung to him with the most sincere devotion and venerated his memory.

If my previous estimate of Prince Metternich as a statesman was not materially supplemented by the publication of his papers, the reason is simply that I was acquainted with most of those documents before they were printed. These eight volumes taught me nothing new, but only confirmed old truths. In judging of Metternich's conduct as a statesman, it is right to bear in mind that the Prince never possessed under the Emperor Ferdinand, to say nothing of the Emperor Francis, the full powers of a leading Prime Minister; such powers, for instance, as Pitt, Wellington,

Palmerston, and Beaconsfield were called upon to wield in England.

Born at a stormy period, exposed to the most conflicting influences, called when very young to important posts and responsibilities, Prince Metternich, at the age of thirty-six, had to take the helm of government in a great Empire, then shaken to its very foundations. He did this with courage, energy, and intelligence, and continued thirty-nine years in office, a faithful servant of his master, a conscientious organ of the Emperor's will. Unhappily for him and for Austria, with all his sound and sober common-sense, his energy and his decision, he lacked the swing and stimulus of real creative genius. He had no ear for the requirements of the time, and despised public opinion, frequently even when it deserved attention. All enthusiasm seemed to him dangerous and revolutionary, even that of the German people in the War of Liberation, useful as that enthusiasm was to himself. Nevertheless, he knew how to take advantage of the *aura popularis* when it furthered his ends. One recollects, for example, his pleasure at the applause that greeted the Emperor Francis on his journey to the Rhine in 1818. To the German people Metternich was a stranger, and he never appreciated their aspirations and needs. It never entered his mind to take that factor into his account. And this was the source of those self-deceptions which chiefly explain the barrenness of his policy.

The map of Europe, as it issued from the Congress of Vienna, was, as everybody knows, a fanciful and arbitrary piece of patchwork, which bore the stamp of a frivolous and unprincipled age. The longings of the German nation for power and unity, which had been awakened by the efforts made in the War of Liberation, remained unsatisfied.

Prussia—no 'satiated' State, to use Metternich's own expression—too strong to be a vassal, but too weak to be a Great Power, was likewise baulked of her expectations, and had some trouble to make the spoiled inhabitants of the Rhine provinces forget how well they had fared under the crosier. The frontiers of the other German States had been traced with arbitrary caprice. Some of them, like Würtemberg and Baden, were left with the additional territory which they had acquired through Napoleon, but which, being mostly made up through mediatisation, had no historical connection with the dynasty. The King of Saxony not only lost the Duchy of Warsaw, but was also compelled to surrender the larger portion of his hereditary possessions as a compensation to Prussia, since Russia refused to give up the Duchy in question. The principle of the equality of rights of all the German sovereigns, an invention of Metternich's, remained a mere fiction from the first. For the anomalous position he secured by that means to Austria and Prussia, of being represented in the German Diet by only a portion of their territories, enabled them, as Great European Powers, to repudiate at pleasure their obligations as German Powers. The *arrière-pensée* of the Austrian Cabinet when the German Confederation was formed, was the wish to secure to the Austrian Emperor certain advantages which he had derived from the possession of the Imperial crown of Germany, without saddling him with the responsibilities attached thereto.

One of the most unhappy results of the Congress of Vienna was the so-called 'Congress-Poland' it created. The liberal Emperor Alexander had coquetted with the Poles, and wished to make them concessions which, while failing to satisfy their national aspirations, made it impossible for the Czar to

govern the country. The Revolution of 1830 showed how hollow and shortlived was this frivolous scheme. It would have been wiser, perhaps, if the entire independence of Poland was impossible, to leave Galicia and Posen also to Russia, and thus make her responsible for the maintenance of peace in the territory of the former Polish republic. Austria and Prussia, by consenting, not of course without some equivalent, to make this sacrifice, would have freed themselves from the 'solidarity' with Russia entailed upon them by the partition of Poland.

With regard, lastly, to France, it may well be asked, after all that has occurred since 1815, whether Austria would not have consulted her own interests better by yielding to the wishes of Prussia and Germany, and consenting then to the earlier, but at any rate less painful, amputation of Alsace and Lorraine, which took place afterwards in 1871. It was a bold thing, beyond doubt, after the unsuccessful experiment of the first Bourbon restoration, to make a second attempt to re-establish the 'monarchy with Republican institutions,' and the price paid to France for that attempt, namely the acquiescence in her old frontiers, was disproportionately high. France, in her volcanic condition, was, as the catastrophes of 1830 and 1848 sufficiently show, far too strong for German interests, and remained after those events what it had been before them, the hotbed of domestic and foreign intrigues.

These instances may suffice to illustrate the unsolved contradictions and political disadvantages which formed the dregs of the Vienna resolutions.

The balance of power in Europe, which was supposed to have been restored in 1815, was a fiction, and the alliance of the Five Powers, which Metternich fancied he had sealed at

Aix-la-Chapelle for ever, soon proved an idle phantom.[1] And to this fiction and this phantom Austria had now to sacrifice all her strength for three-and-thirty years, because Prince Metternich regarded the fiction as the embodiment of absolute right, and the phantom as the only means of making that right prevail.

Metternich's diagnosis of the social maladies of old Europe was perfectly correct. When the outbreak of the evil, however, is made to date from 1789, it may well be objected that its origin was far more remote; and, to say nothing of the Servile insurrections in the Roman Empire, reference may fairly be made to the Peasant War indirectly kindled by the Reformation in Germany, to the Revolution in England with its communistic features, to the victorious rebellion of the Gueux in the Netherlands, and to other causes. The fact is, that this social malady, like gout, becomes periodically acute at different points, but may fairly be described as chronic. Still it is not enough to admit the existence of a disease, and the palliatives proposed by Metternich served only in the main to increase the evil and intensify the paroxysms of fever. Protocols of conferences and acts of congress will never conquer a revolution; no custom-house officers or censors of the press will ever shut out ideas which are stirring the world. States are living organisms, not dead bodies, to be experimented upon. Not in war only, but also in peace, Napoleon's *gros bataillons* decide the day. The first requisite of a sound policy is, therefore, real power. A politician, who deceives himself

[1] This alliance, as is well known, had been dissolved already in 1814; Austria, England, and France, offensively and defensively united, were then about to declare war against Russia and Prussia, when Napoleon's return compelled them to forget their quarrels and renew their alliance. After Napoleon's overthrow, that alliance ceased to have any positive object, and, strictly speaking, continued to exist only on paper.

about the real power of the State he represents, may be ever so dexterous a juggler, ever so clever a conjuror, he will always come off second-best in his dealings with more powerful States, however superior he may be to their leaders.

Prince Metternich had never been fully conscious of the relative weakness of Austria, or, with his intellectual superiority over most if not all of the princes and ministers of his time, he would certainly have made at least an effort to secure for Austria those foundations of real power in which she was wanting. For geographical position alone, the mere number of souls and square miles in a country can never suffice to give to a conglomerated State, especially when it is artificially composed of various nationalities, differing in degrees of culture and without any common history, language, or manners, that weight and power peculiar to empires which represent one and the same nation.

It is obvious that in 1815 there was one means, and only one, of giving to the Hapsburg-Lotharingian monarchy that position of power which could make Metternich's Conservative principle an absolute truth. This was the reacceptance of the Imperial crown of Germany, and, as an object of policy, the ousting of Prussia from her position as a Great Power, and the mediatising of all the German princes. None but the head of the German nation could ever succeed in not only curbing and checking the complex Austrian State, with all its various nationalities, but also of dictating peace to Europe.

Such a task, however, corresponded neither with the character of the Emperor Francis nor with the ideas of his Minister. Both lived under the delusion, that real power could be supplied by a substitute, and such a substitute the German Confederation was from its commencement. What availed it that Metternich was the intellectual superior of the Prussian

ministers Hardenberg, Wittgenstein, Bernstorff, Ancillon, and others, whatever their names, and that he intimidated Frederick William III., who was in need of peace? What availed it that he endeavoured to galvanise the cumbrous machinery of the impotent Congress of Ambassadors in Frankfort by Ministerial conferences in Carlsbad and Vienna, or that he exerted a pressure over the rebellious Ministers of Bavaria and Würtemberg? This restless activity, this anxious patronage, was of no value to Austria, when, after the death of Alexander I. and the suicide of Lord Londonderry, England and Russia renounced the pseudo-Pentarchy, and signed a protocol (April 4, 1826) behind Metternich's back, which, in spite of all the eloquence wasted at Troppau, Laibach, and Verona, shook the foundations of Austria's policy and sealed the fate of European Turkey in a manner which a powerful Austria would never have endured. And what availed, moreover, all those diplomatic arts of persuasion, all those neatly worded and concordant resolutions, when the July storm burst out in Paris and in a few hours shattered to pieces the carefully re-established throne of the legitimate dynasty?

In politics the greatest evil is not guilt, as Schiller says, but weakness. At times the Austrian Chancellor called to mind this truth, as is shown by his reports to the Emperor. Let anyone read, for example, his report of 1817, in which the German Bund is described as the best combination imaginable for the internal welfare of Austria; or that of 1829, in which, after misfortune had occurred, after victorious Russia, regardless of Austrian interests, had dictated peace, not to say her death sentence, to Turkey at Adrianople, the Emperor Francis is warned that it might, perhaps, be opportune to consider how to put an end to the financial chaos of the Empire, and restore the army, weakened by continual reduc-

tions, to a footing which should command respect. 'Placet,' ran the resolution of the Emperor. But there the matter rested, and no sign was seen in France or Russia, in England or Germany, of Austria's having acquired a commanding position among the Powers.

Standing still means going back, with individuals and with States. A State which thinks only of keeping what it has got, must necessarily go back directly it has to do with neighbours who look chiefly not to keeping but to getting, and are always bent on enlarging their territory, and strengthening their sphere of power.

Thoughtful admirers of Prince Metternich have often asked why the restless, self-sacrificing activity of this man, so far superior to the majority of his contemporaries, and so rich in experience, should have produced no permanent result—why the personal influence over the Cabinets of Europe, which he undeniably possessed in 1815–1825, was not turned to better account in the interests of Austria? It has been attempted to answer these questions by objecting that the verdict of history must still be waited for. For the cause is not yet quite ripe for judgment. Circumstances of an aggravating, but also of an extenuating nature, will be yielded by the study of State papers. Among the extenuating circumstances must be cited in particular the fact that everyone is the child of his time, and the slave of its dominant opinions. The patriarchal theory of princely power was universal, and the national desires and aspirations now current were regarded then in Germany as dangerous innovations, and ominous signs of revolution. The recognition of the full sovereignty of the smaller German princes seemed, therefore, in 1813, to Prince Metternich a not excessive price for their joining the alliance against Napoleon. The more logical view, perhaps, was that taken at

Kalisch, in the Russian and Prussian head quarters, under Stein's inspiration, which contemplated treating all the territories of the Rhenish Confederation as a conquered country, and mediatising its princes. After the Austrian Cabinet had tied its hands in regard to Bavaria and Würtemberg, it was of course indispensable to treat all the princes who had escaped the Napoleonic deluge as entitled to equal rights, for they flattered themselves in Vienna that they would then be able to subject Prussia also to the dictation of the Diet.

Events are stronger than men. The cannon of Solferino, Sadowa, and Sedan tore to pieces the web spun by the Metternich school. And as the Nüremberg aldermen were always wiser when they left the town council, so it is easier in 1885 to point out what should have been done in 1815 to secure the permanent peace of the world; easier, at any rate, than it was to foresee in 1815 what ought to be done if the Hapsburgs were unwilling to yield to the Hohenzollerns the hegemony of Germany; to the Piedmontese the whole of Italy with its capital, Rome; and to the German nation, united under Prussia's leadership, the honour of vanquishing the nephew of Napoleon I. without the assistance of Austria.

The life of States revolves, like our planet, around two poles—the positive and the negative. The positive is called the 'struggle for existence,' the negative the 'sweet habit of life.' In Germany, Prussia has represented the former, and Austria the latter. The Imperial crown of Germany, which the Emperor Francis, preferring the sweet habit of life to the struggle for existence, disdained in 1815, King William has conquered in two bloody campaigns, and placed it on his head in the palace of Louis XIV. at the unanimous invitation of the German princes, and amidst the acclamation of the German nation.

Such, as matters now stand, are the results of a peace policy of thirty-three years, which, being destitute at the centre of any real power and creative energy, let loose centrifugal forces, encouraged foreign enemies, and for the time imperilled the very existence of the Austrian Empire.

Facta loquuntur. 'The rest,' as Hamlet says, 'is silence.'

CHAPTER XIII.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.—1858.

London, Jan. 18: Conversation with Disraeli on the critical Position of the Ministry.—London, Feb. 14: State of Tension with France in consequence of Orsini's Attempt on Napoleon.—London, Feb. 21: Defeat of Lord Palmerston's Ministry on the Conspiracy Bill—Lord Derby undertakes the Government.—London, Feb. 28: Retrospect of the Debate on the Conspiracy Bill—Secret History of Palmerston's Downfall.—London, June 27: Paris Conferences on the Danubian Principalities—Strained Relations between France and Austria.—London, July 24: Annual Show of the Royal Agricultural Society at Chester.—London, Buckingham Palace, August 9: Letter of Prince Albert to Count Vitzthum—Private Character of the Queen's Visit to Babelsberg.—Lisbon, Dec. 29: The Portuguese Ministers—Critical State of Finances.

London: Jan. 18, 1858.

An hour and a half's conversation with Disraeli has enabled me to give you some trustworthy information about the intentions and expectations of the Conservative party.

The leader of the Opposition received me with these words: 'During your four months' absence the situation has materially changed. So long as I have known you—I may say, indeed, so long as I have occupied myself with politics—I can remember no moment when the Ministry for the time being has found itself confronted with such a menacing and complicated state of affairs. All my gloomy predictions about India,' he continued, 'have not been only verified, but surpassed by facts. I have only to reproach myself that I did not put the colours on thick enough, but underrated in my speech the danger, and overrated the capacity of the Ministers.'

The prodigies of valour performed by our brave troops in the face of such unexampled odds had been squandered to no purpose. Delhi was taken, but the victory was not followed up; Lucknow was relieved, but was not held. We tried in vain to rouse the Premier from his easy-going optimist intoxication, and galvanise him in some degree into statesmanlike activity. We urged in vain the calling out of the militia, and the putting forth of all our strength. From his ignorance of Indian affairs, Lord Palmerston had to trust to men who, like Vernon Smith, were mere machines, and drew their knowledge from the reports of needy writers and short-sighted officials. The first false view led to new blunders, and the blindness of the Cabinet found encouragement and justification in the lying reports of the Ministerial daily press. Never had public opinion been so shamelessly led astray.

'Sir Colin Campbell is an able general, and competent for his task. But what can good generalship do without troops? To win back Oudh, which was so thoughtlessly annexed, he requires at least 40,000 men, and he has scarcely 4,000 under his command. With this handful he has been forced to make his escape across the frontier and again abandon Lucknow, the key of our position, to the enemy, after having rescued the sick and women. And all this because Lord Canning, intoxicated by the capture of Delhi, has treated haughtily the feudatory princes of the ex-King of Oudh, who had kept themselves previously neutral, and has thus thrown them into the arms of the rebellion. The whole of Oudh is now in arms. The fatal phrase that we had only a military revolt to deal with, has lost all meaning. We have to deal, in that foolishly annexed province, with a national insurrection. We must put down that insurrection at any cost, and that soon, or the Punjab will rise, and the army of Bombay follow the

example of that of Bengal. And what forces have we to do this with? The Ministerial papers talk of 80,000 British troops. In reality there are only 20,000 under arms, and only 5,000 more are on the way. Sir Colin Campbell's private letters of despondency establish beyond all question the losses sustained by the Queen's troops through the climate, the strain of the last battle, and the appearance of epidemic diseases. We are experiencing on an increased scale a second edition of the inconceivable follies and unwarrantable neglect to which we sacrificed our first army in the Crimea. Our Indian Empire is now for the first time in danger. Our army also has disappeared with our rule and our prestige. So menacing has the crisis become, that it is a question whether we could fill up, without resorting to a general conscription, the gaps for which we have to thank the enemy less than illness, and the war less than our impotence.

'Such is the moment which the Premier chooses to carry out the Whigs' favourite scheme, hatched eighty years ago, of transferring the rule of the East India Company to the Crown—in other words, to the Ministry of the day. It is true, we have not much to praise the Company for, and have often intimated that we should not be sorry to see it done away with. Palmerston, careless as usual, thinks he will be able to accomplish the *coup* without encountering any opposition in the House of Commons. Nobody could have foreseen that the old fox, who knows better than any other man living all the tricks and dodges of Parliamentary life, would fall into such a trap. After a victorious suppression of the revolt, he could have done anything. In the present state of things he could hardly choose a more inauspicious moment for officially informing the Company of their dissolution. Already public opinion is asserting itself, already the

Radical newspapers in particular are declaring themselves for the maintenance of a Company which, in spite of all its faults, has undoubtedly been useful to the middle classes for years. One thing seems certain, that a transformation so materially affecting our home affairs cannot be entrusted to men who, by their senseless policy of annexation, have caused the mischief, and are responsible for the present crisis. Palmerston's personal prestige is gone, and without Palmerston the Cabinet tumbles to pieces of itself. When Parliament opens, the Premier will have no alternative but to retreat or be defeated. If he saves himself by a retreat, other dangers await him. The financial policy of the upright but weak Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose only means of meeting the exigencies of the day is by a constant series of loans, has led to a deficit, the amount of which, when once known, will not be learned without the most painful astonishment. New taxes and burdensome imposts are indispensable if India is to be saved and the deficit made good.

'Another rock ahead is the Reform Bill. The country just now is against it, and, in fact, we have no time to busy ourselves with this question. But Lord John Russell is lying in wait, and Palmerston may perhaps, from fear of his rival, and in the hope of strengthening his vanishing popularity, be tempted into bringing in a Radical measure against his own better convictions.

'You see we are on the eve of a Session which promises to be of greater interest than any for years.

'The Ministerial papers announce the dissolution of the Conservative party on the ground that Lord Derby and I did not give the customary Parliamentary dinners last December. As if we should ever have arranged dinners of that sort, when Parliament was suddenly called together in the middle

of winter, at a time when our people were in Paris, Rome, or Naples, and should have been invited at least six weeks before.

'As to the hard-won victory on the Bank Charter question, the Ministers need not be too conceited about it. It is true we were defeated, Gladstone and I, but only because Palmerston at the last moment proposed a compromise, and never ventured to advocate the inquiry which we resisted. The fact that Gladstone voted with us is of itself significant. We are at all times ready to take back this deserter, but only if he surrenders unconditionally.

'Desperate as matters are now in India, I count nevertheless on a good ending if half measures are finally abjured. There is only one means of preserving our rule in Asia—a dictatorship, which ought to be given to Lord Ellenborough. He appreciates Sir Colin Campbell, and knows how to make use of him. But Lord Palmerston dare not use this means; to do so he requires a stronger Government.

'Keep all this to yourself. In six weeks you will discover that I am not a bad prophet. Even before that time you will see the split which is now prevailing in the Whig camp. The death of the Duke of Devonshire is a hard blow for that party.

'Dangers also are threatening the Ministry on the field of foreign policy, dangers which Lord Palmerston's thoughtlessness plainly underrates. Brunnow's reappearance is naturally most distasteful to the present Cabinet. It has been no secret to us, that Clarendon and Cowley have moved heaven and earth to prevent this appointment and keep Chreptowitch here. Still more serious is the last attempt on the Emperor Napoleon, for this will lead to demands respecting the refugees who are living here, and will breed endless difficulties.'

A small ball given by the Queen afforded me an opportunity of verifying in some measure these remarks of Disraeli in conversations which I had with Lord Derby and Lord Hardwicke. Both of them fully recognised the gravity of the situation, though they did not appear to share the impatient pessimism of their colleague. Lord Derby thought there was no want of rocks on which Lord Palmerston's skiff might founder, but the moment had not yet come to foretell when and how that shipwreck would occur.

To judge from hearsay, thus much seems certain, that the East India Company is now moribund, and both parties will shortly be quarrelling over the inheritance. If India is placed under Crown rule, the patronage of the Company will fall to the Ministry of the day, who will acquire thereby a political lever of incalculable power. Possibly Lord Palmerston overrates the importance of the capture of Delhi, and has been far too much in a hurry to get possession of this precious legacy by a *coup de main*.

Whether Disraeli believes that affairs in India are as bad as he says, I might doubt. It is certain that they are not so good as the Ministers, through their servile press, would have the public think. The truth in this, as in so many cases, probably lies halfway between the two extremes.

Postscript.—Kielmansegge has succeeded in obtaining the surrender of the Hanoverian Crown jewels. Palmerston consoled himself with the remark that they could be replaced by paste, for nobody would suspect the Queen of England of wearing sham jewels. Lord Derby, on hearing this, exclaimed, 'That is just like our present Ministers; all show, and nothing genuine.'

London: Feb. 14, 1858.

Persigny left yesterday for Paris. His ostensible object

is to express his thanks for his appointment to the Council of Regency. Many people believe he will bring back his letters of recall. It cannot be denied that he has made his position here very difficult, and would have done well, remembering his past, to take for his rule of conduct Talleyrand's maxim, 'Surtout n'ayez pas de zèle.' The main question is whether the debates in the House of Commons on the Orsini attempt have not done more harm than good to France. The practically meagre dribblet of satisfaction which was to have been obtained by the Conspiracy Bill, has at any rate been dearly purchased. In unprejudiced quarters the exculpatory despatch of the 6th is considered somewhat too strongly coloured. Disraeli's criticism of the first French despatch, of January 20, has probably not helped to strengthen Walewski's evidently waning influence. Both despatches, each in its way, are unfortunate. Both of them betray a want of self-confidence, and far too much anxiety about a rupture with England. Such, at least, is the verdict here.

The only really pleasing and practically important result hitherto is the 'Pater, peccavi,' which the Premier has had the courage to make publicly in Parliament.

London: Feb. 21, 1858.

Though it is too soon just at present to review the causes and effects of the Ministerial crisis of the day before yesterday, some observations force themselves forward on the scene itself, which will serve to complete the account of the situation in England.

That the dictatorship acquired by Lord Palmerston at the last election was approaching its end, was to be foreseen, and my despatches will have prepared you for it. But nobody could guess that the end would be so sudden and so lament-

able. Both the Ministers and the Opposition have been surprised by the result of the division on the 19th. In proof of this, I could quote the language of the Ministerial papers, and the statement made by Lord Clarendon on the 18th. Lady Palmerston's departure for the country on the previous day shows further that she had no misgivings. But the most remarkable proof is the conduct of the Ministerial whip, Mr. Hayter. He counted for certain on a majority of eighty for the second reading of the Conspiracy Bill, and let several Liberal members leave the House without pairing.

The careless spirit in which the Premier moved the second reading, displeased the Commons as much as his offhand excuses for not having answered Walewski's despatch offended them: His friends had expected from him more earnestness, and his opponents more discretion. Milner Gibson's dispassionate speech evoked on that account all the more applause. Those cheers may have first suggested to the Opposition that the moment had come to offer checkmate to the Prime Minister, who after his victory on the India Bill had deemed himself secure. Lord Derby surveyed the commencement of the fight from the gallery with the glance of a general, and left the House after Gibson's speech with the remark, 'This looks rather serious.' Sir George Grey's tardy promise that the French despatch would be answered after the second reading of the Bill, only confirmed his opponents in the opinion how right they had been in censuring the Government for not having answered it before. The Lord Advocate upset still further the temper of the House and the hopes of the Government. The House had no ear for learned legal disquisitions, and longed for the spiced food which Sir Robert Peel hastened to offer them in a vigorous philippic against his former chief and patron. The undeserved impression pro-

duced by this really unimportant speech, will have shown Lord Palmerston very clearly that his hour of doom has struck. Happily for the reputation of the House, but unhappily for the Ministry, the debate assumed once more, with Gladstone's eloquence, a statesmanlike character. The foremost speaker of the House showed himself worthy of his reputation. His elegance of diction was perfect, much as there was to lament in the too Radical tone of his often fine-spun argumentation. His thundering periods were received with thundering echoes of applause. The monotonous reply of the Attorney-General was only calculated to rouse the excitement of the House to the pitch of passion. Add to this, that Lord C—— had the want of tact to show himself in the gallery. This was considered, from the unpopularity of that Minister, as a challenge. Nobody, however, expected the debate would close that night, and the Ministers could still secretly hope to be able to effect an adjournment till the Monday. If that could be done, they might possibly, nay probably, be saved. A couple of days would have sufficed to bring the majority round again. This danger was detected by Disraeli. The iron must be struck while hot, he thought, and accordingly he sprang up and offered check to the Government by prefacing his speech with the words, 'I understand that it is the general wish of the House that we should come to a division to-night.' The 'move' succeeded, thanks to the undeniable skill with which the Tory chief expounded the reasons that induced him to vote against the second reading of a Bill the first reading of which had only been carried by the support of himself and his party. 'What ten days ago,' he said, 'was a question between the Parliament of England and the people and Government of France, has now become a question

between the House and the servants of the Crown. Have they, or have they not, done their duty?'

Lord Palmerston, as I have said, completely lost his temper. Unworthy invectives and reckless vehemence betrayed that he had already given up the game as lost, while he was still holding it in his hands. It was a lamentable exhibition. Like an old comedian, who has forgotten his part, he in vain endeavoured to bid defiance to the scorn of his hearers.

As regards the question on which the Ministry have suffered shipwreck, there is only one opinion—that Lord Clarendon ought not to have left Walewski's despatch unanswered. But the best thing is that he did answer it, and that in very sharp terms. It is true, however, that this was only in a private letter to Persigny, which could not have been laid before Parliament.

The serious reflections on the future of England, which these proceedings suggest, do not need to be further enlarged on. No Government is possible if the House of Commons arrogates the right of finally deciding whether this or that despatch of a foreign Court is to be answered or not. Any Minister who is not left free to follow his own conviction in such matters of form has no alternative but to resign. This step was unanimously resolved on at the meeting of the Cabinet yesterday, after a short consultation. The vote of confidence which several members of the Liberal party urged should be brought forward to save Palmerston, was to my knowledge not discussed.

The Queen has not delayed a moment to accept the proffered resignation of the Ministry and to send for Lord Derby. Lord Palmerston is said to have advised her Majesty to entrust the formation of the new Cabinet either to Lord Derby or Lord John Russell. Either of these, he said, would be able

to form a strong Government with the help of the Peelites. Lord Derby has received the mandate, and endeavoured to come to an agreement with the Peelites. The latter had a conference this afternoon with Lord Aberdeen, which seems, however, to have been unsuccessful. A purely Tory Cabinet is, therefore, talked of. The number of lists of the Ministry now current is legion; in a few days we shall know for certain how it is to be composed.

Walewski personally will not regret the fall of Lord Palmerston, and will comfort himself for the sitting of the 19th with the consciousness that his unfortunate despatch of January 20 has brought about, at least indirectly, the overthrow of the English dictator.

London: Feb. 28, 1858.

The confessions of the 'Observer,' a newspaper entirely devoted to Lord Palmerston, throw all the clearer side light on the secret history of the remarkable sitting of the 19th, as they are confirmed by the 'Saturday Review,' which is inspired by the Peelites. According to these papers Lord Palmerston has, as several of his intimate friends declared, committed political suicide.

There had been premonitory signs, as my despatches will have shown, that the defeated Premier was meditating a *fausse sortie*, in order to get rid of the Marquis C—— and some other colleagues, and then come back on the stage stronger than ever. Certainly nobody thought that this *fausse sortie* would be effected on the night of the 19th. Thus, for instance, Lord Clarendon had left the House of Lords at six o'clock in the evening, after having received the quieting assurance of Mr. Hayter that he was sure of a majority of eighty. The Foreign Secretary first learned the catastrophe the next morning through the newspapers. Nevertheless, it is more than probable that Palmer-

ston, on observing the growing ill-humour of the House, had suddenly resolved to fall on the Conspiracy Bill. In doing so he chose the smaller of two evils. For the motion respecting the Lord Privy Seal stood on the orders of the day for the 4th of March, and it seemed at any rate more dignified to retire before the scandalous debate on the appointment of Lord C—— should have made the resignation of the Ministry unavoidable. This explains the carelessness of Hayter, of whose conduct one of Palmerston's warmest supporters said that night, 'This looks like treason.' It is unquestionable, as his victorious opponents admit, that it depended on Lord Palmerston alone to give another turn to the debate. An adjournment till the following Monday would have secured time to restore discipline in the ranks of the majority. Threatened by a manœuvre similar to that which last year had brought about his defeat on the China question, Lord Palmerston has tried to repeat the tactics which then succeeded so brilliantly. To dissolve his own Parliament was, of course, impossible. He reckoned on a repetition of what had occurred after Lord Aberdeen's downfall in 1855. He never dreamed that Lord Derby would venture to undertake office without the Peelites. He had just as little fear of Lord John Russell, and counted with certainty on the crisis bringing him again to the helm.

But the situation since 1855 has entirely changed. The country was then in the midst of war, and public opinion pointed to Lord Palmerston as the only man who could bring it to an honourable termination. Lord Derby was wise enough, after Lord Palmerston as well as the Peelites had refused to co-operate with him, not to venture the attempt he is now making. The Tory chief was then in the same position towards Parliament as his opponent is in to-day. The House of Commons elected under his own leadership could not pro-

perly be dissolved by himself, while now he can unsheathe the sword of dissolution and brandish it over the broken Liberal party. Lord Derby in 1855 reckoned on Palmerston's necessarily wearing himself out in the full possession of power. On that point the Tory chief has not been mistaken. Lord Palmerston's name has not yet quite lost its magic; but his three years' dictatorship has destroyed the illusions of the Radicals and also the confidence on which his popularity reposed.

Lord Palmerston's friends are consoling themselves for their defeat. They declare that the Liberals, who voted for Milner Gibson's amendment, had only intended to give a lesson to the Government, and not in any way to overthrow it. On the other hand, they assert that the Conservatives had manœuvred against their own interests. It would have been better, they say, for Lord Derby and his followers to have waited for the debate on Lord C——'s appointment, and inflicted a damaging defeat on the Ministry on that question. The Tories had now inherited the difficulties which would inevitably result from the rejection of the unpopular Conspiracy Bill.

London: June 27, 1858.

The negotiations in Paris on the future government of the Danubian Principalities, which were stipulated for in the protocol of the Conference as well as transacted outside the Conference chamber, lie, as regards their details, beyond the ken of those who are not immediately concerned in them. Still the reports from Vienna and Paris will have left no doubt that the prospect of a speedy agreement is becoming daily more remote, and that matters altogether are taking a more serious, not to say a menacing, turn.

The instinct of the public is shown by the depression on the Stock Exchange and the alarming articles of the 'Times.'

People think, without knowing why, that the inscrutable policy of the silent Emperor of the French has again taken a turn which may have the most serious consequences for the peace of the world. Here at least no doubt exists that the growing discontent in France makes it necessary for Napoleon to divert once more his subjects' eyes abroad, and give occupation to the army, which is thirsting for war and glory. The marked coolness, not to say contempt, with which the Turkish plenipotentiaries are treated in Paris, and the daily more defiant language of the French Ministers as soon as Austria attempts to take the Turkish Empire under her protection, are symptoms which fill experienced people with anxiety. They see in them a proof that Napoleon never intended from the first to promote a speedy settlement of the question of the Danubian Principalities, or to prevent complications from arising on the Adriatic coast and in Italy. They fear, on the contrary, that he is using all his efforts to keep open every question which could be turned to account as occasion arises in order to prepare his own country, as well as Europe, for a rupture with Austria.

If Baron Hübner reminds Napoleon of the object for which the sword was drawn in the Crimean War, or represents to him the obligations undertaken in the Peace of Paris as well as in the Treaty of April, which was supposed to have been ratified anew at Osborne, such reminders and representations will be rejected almost with scorn. 'Ce n'est pas pour la Turquie, c'est contre la Russie que j'ai fait la guerre,' is a remark of Napoleon's which characterises a premeditated change of front. It is entirely in keeping with that remark that the 'Moniteur' reproduces, with a certain satisfaction, utterances of the Sardinian Ministers or other leaders of the Revolution, which seem to point to an understanding

with France. When the Austrian Ambassador begs Walewski to contradict such utterances, he gets no answer beyond an almost contemptuous shrug of the shoulders. Is it to be wondered at, that the impression is being created in Vienna that Napoleon is seeking a quarrel, and only waiting for an opportunity to fling aside the mask of peace?

In principle, the present English Ministers, like their predecessors, are entirely on the side of Austria. But they are still too busily occupied with the question of their own existence to reconnect the threads of foreign policy which had been severed by the downfall of Palmerston and Clarendon, and to be able to arrange a settled programme for all future contingencies. People in Vienna can, therefore, hardly conceal from themselves that the present weak Tory Cabinet will rather leave Austria to defend single-handed their common policy, than venture on a rupture with France. During the present diplomatic prelude, Lord Malmesbury restricts himself to giving a frank though cautious support to Austria, while privately warning her to give way to France. At the same time, the latest family alliance between England and Prussia will be useful in recommending emphatically at Berlin a co-operation with Austria in all European questions, and it will have a corresponding effect in Vienna.

In the question immediately before the Conference, the support of Prussia is here reckoned on for certain. This is the case also in Vienna. At least, the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin reports that Prussia will perhaps speak on the side of France, but at all events vote with Austria.

Under these circumstances, some importance is attached to the King of the Belgians' visit to the English Court. 'You may depend upon it,' said to me yesterday a well-informed British statesman, 'his Majesty has some irons in the fire.'

Among other things, King Leopold is said to be improving his stay here to preach caution to the Orleanist Princes. The latter seem to be secretly making preparations, in order not to let themselves be taken unawares by any events on the Seine.

London: July 24, 1858.

When in 1838 Cobden founded his successful Anti-Corn-Law League, the Royal Agricultural Society was formed almost at the same time for the protection of agriculture and of industries connected with the cultivation of the soil. This Society had not merely a negative and transitory object, but was intended, on the contrary, to promote actively and permanently, by means of meetings, exhibitions, distributions of prizes, and so on, the improvement of agriculture. During the twenty years of its existence, it has absorbed and centralised the associations established for similar purposes in various counties, and still partly existing.

The annual meetings of the Society are always in July, in one or the other county. Fine collections of cattle, products, and machinery have been brought together in connection with these yearly meetings, and afford at once a measure of the progress attained, and the means of making trial of inventions and improvements for the common good of all the counties.

The Royal Agricultural Society consists of 5,000 members, representing all classes of society, and has expended during the last twenty years upwards of 150,000*l.* in the furtherance of its objects. Independent of any patronage or support from the Government, this private society has become a power, whose existence and popularity testify to the importance which the most ancient of all industries enjoys in free England, in com-

parison with the perhaps exaggerated development of manufacturing industry.

Agriculture during the last forty years or so has become a science, which has been largely assisted by the important discoveries in physics and chemistry. The 'Times' is right in saying that the notion that nothing is new under the sun is rather dissipated by the astonishing progress which the tilling of the soil and the breeding of cattle have made in the course of a single generation. This progress in agriculture has in so far a high political importance for the British nation, as it supplies a naturally Conservative counterpoise against the exaggerated and exclusive impetus given to manufacturing industry, which is acting as a gradual solvent of society and threatening the foundations of Church and State. No excuse, therefore, will be needed if I endeavour to inform you, as well as a layman can do so, of the chief incidents of this year's meetings.

The rendezvous for this meeting had been fixed at Chester, one of the most ancient towns in England, which boasts of an existence of two thousand years, Roman fortifications, mediæval walls, and a fine cathedral. A happier choice could hardly have been made than this, the chief town of a county famous for its milk and cheese. It can be reached, by two rival lines of railway, in about six hours from London, and forms a centre within almost an hour's journey of Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham. Special trains at moderate fares facilitated the journey, and on the second day of the meeting, the 22nd, upwards of twenty or thirty thousand people crowded the improvised city of tents. For the first time since its existence, the Society has found the increased and not inconsiderable expenses of erecting the Exhibition buildings covered by the entrance money taken from the visitors.

As in Spain each provincial town has its arena for bull fights, so in England each has its racecourse. Situated just in front of the gates, the racecourse at Chester offered an excellent site for the exhibition. The large fenced-in pentagon of twenty-five acres was divided into three parts, one of which was devoted to the exhibition of steam machines in motion and the trial of their performances, and the other to the implement yard, as it is called, containing tools and small machinery, while the third served for the cattle show.

In the implement yard were fifty sheds, protected by felt roofs against the rain, and containing 193 stalls. A catalogue of 374 pages contained a list of all the exhibits. It sufficed by itself to show the wealth of this industrial collection, consisting only of implements of tillage, which enables farmers, who flock together hither from all parts of the Empire, to study the latest improvements and simplifications, and take note of the best firms and the cheapest prices. The lively interest in all of these improvements is shared alike by the peer and the peasant, and even by the fashionable beauties of the London drawing-rooms. It was worth while to notice the untiring patience with which the exhibitors explained to each person, without any loud hawking of their wares, the advantages of their patented inventions, though, of course, this kind attention was not wholly disinterested, for the implement yard serves also as a bazaar, in which important purchases are made and considerable orders are given.

I shall not be expected to describe the most prominent inventions or pronounce any judgment on their value; but I may make one remark on what I saw. The comparative cheapness and nice workmanship, not attained on the Continent, which is shown by the English-made implements, are due mainly to the preponderating and skilful use of iron. So

long as we in Germany render the cheap employment of this all-serviceable metal impossible by our protective duties, we shall never be able to compete with England in this field. Cheap iron is the secret of the problem.

On the right of the entrance were the field produce and seeds, and on the left, in conspicuous rows, the Cheshire cheeses were exhibited. The value attached here to this branch of industry is shown by the prizes affixed to the exhibits, 100*l.* being marked against the four best, being not less than 60 lbs. weight each. Prizes also were given for the butter; the first prize of 10*l.* was taken by the old Field Marshal Viscount Combermere.

The catalogue of the cattle show contained, including the poultry, 1,193 numbers. The famous shorthorns were represented by seventy bulls and fifty-six milch cows and calves, the Herefords by about eighty specimens, and the Devons by thirty-seven. Each of these breeds was divided into six classes, and for each class there was a first and second prize. The highest prize was 30*l.* and the lowest 5*l.* The shorthorns fetch the highest prices. I learned on good authority that Lieutenant-Colonel Towneley had got 1,200*l.* last year for a bull, and that from an Australian farmer, who had to bear, moreover, the risk of transport. Prince Albert gained a second prize for a Devon bull bred at Windsor.

Some 220 horses were exhibited without counting the foals; namely, agricultural horses, dray horses, and others. Four prizes altogether were offered, ranging from 10*l.* to 50*l.* The finest specimen was a stallion of such fabulous size and strength that it looked like an elephant. The animal had already taken several prizes at previous shows, and was decorated with eighteen medals. Stallions of this strain fetch from 120*l.* to 150*l.* apiece. Besides this there were stallions

and brood mares for getting or breeding hunters and hackneys, as well as the favourite Welsh ponies.

The sheep, bred for the most part merely for fattening, were numerously represented by the two favourite breeds of the Leicesters and Southdowns, but I noticed also some specimens of other long-woolled or short-woolled breeds. The catalogue gives about four hundred numbers. The highest prizes were 20*l.*

The results also of pig breeding, which has recently attracted great attention, seemed worthy of notice. Altogether 130 specimens were exhibited. The most unnatural marvels of artificial obesity excited general admiration. The breeder showed me with triumph a monstrosity of this kind, which could neither walk nor stand, and could only see when the roll of fat was lifted up that covered the eyes. The first prize was 10*l.* Exceptionally fine specimens fetched from 30*l.* to 40*l.*

Neither the implement yard nor the cattle show, however, were said to have imparted such a peculiar interest to this year's exhibition as a competition the like of which had never been seen before in England or anywhere else. The Society had offered a prize of 500*l.* for the most efficient steam plough. Three firms competed in the attempt to solve this interesting problem. The main object of the trial was to settle the best way of dealing with light and heavy soils. Two steam ploughs were at work together in a field not far from the town. According to all appearances, Fowler's system, which depends on the employment of a stationary engine and windlass, deserves the preference. The two other systems require the use of locomotives with the so-called 'endless railway.' For, whether this locomotive draws or pushes the plough, in either case a loss of time is unavoidable, owing to

the weight of the machine. The verdict of the public is unanimously in favour of Mr. Fowler's invention. The award of the judges is to be given on August 4. What is chiefly to be admired in this invention, is the rapidity with which the machine ploughs regular furrows a foot deep in the stiff soil, a speed far exceeding that of a plough drawn by horses. Experts attach the greatest value to the endless wire-rope, which connects the plough with the so-called anchor pulley and the engine. Of course the stationary apparatus is applicable not only to ploughs, but also to mowing and threshing. The cost of ploughing per acre is 2*l.* by manual labour, 1*l.* by a common plough drawn by horses, and only 10*s.* with the steam cultivator. Thus this invention effects a saving of at least 50 per cent. Inclosing herewith a detailed account and drawing, I must not forget, in conclusion, to remind you that wages and the keep of draught horses are here far higher than in Germany, while the machines with us would be neither so cheaply repaired nor so easily kept in order as in England. Before the steam plough, therefore, can be recommended to our farmers, it might be well to wait and see whether a still simpler solution of the problem can be found.

The Prince Consort to Count Vitzthum.

(Autograph.)

Buckingham Palace: Aug. 9, 1858.

My dear Count Vitzthum,—I have duly received your note. The Queen understands fully the reasons of delicacy which make the King and Prince George renounce their visit to Babelsberg. We ourselves are compelled to maintain strictly the private character of our journey, as any departure from that rule might easily lead to personal misunderstandings. I am, yours faithfully,

Albert.

Lisbon: Dec. 29, 1858.

The Portuguese Ministry has come out victorious from the debate on the Address, which was concluded yesterday. The battle was fought with blunted weapons.

The Ministers can reckon on a majority in the Chamber of Deputies of about thirty or forty; that is to say, about two-thirds of the aggregate of votes.

The Chamber of Peers have not yet pronounced their judgment on the differences outstanding with France in consequence of the sentence against the 'Charles et George,' but in this affair the past sins of omission will be judged by them most likely with less indulgence than by the Deputies.

The weakness of an artificial Constitutionalism assumes naturally a more prominent aspect, the more evident it becomes that Portugal can only be saved from decrepitude by the vigorous exercise of monarchical power. To raise hopes in that direction, would be only to indulge in illusions. That the Cabinet will strengthen themselves numerically, is to be expected. Failing this, a collapse seems unavoidable.

The Ministry consists of four members. The President of the Council, the Marquis de Loulé, holds three portfolios, those of the Royal Household, and the Foreign and Home Ministries. Count Avila, the Minister of Finance and Justice, is considered the best speaker and the ablest member of the Government. The Minister of Worship and Public Works is Carlos Bento, still a young man without political antecedents. The Minister of War and Marine was obliged to resign, shortly before the opening of the Cortes, on account of his health, and will be temporarily succeeded by a Visconde, as deaf as a post, who is supposed to be partially insane. In Germany scarcely one of these men would be considered fit to administer a department. Here each of them presides

over two, and the most indolent of them over three. The greatest merit of the present advisers of Dom Pedro V. is their unquestioned honesty. That honest incompetence, however, is often more injurious to the State than dishonest energy, is a favourite theme of the Opposition.

Loulé's good side is his faithful devotion to his young King. Probably this husband of an Infanta serves merely as a stop-gap until the monarch shall be thoroughly initiated into business of State and become his own Prime Minister. Dom Pedro V. is indefatigable enough in his zeal to prepare himself for this part. But whether practical common sense will compensate for his want of experience, and keep him from being tempted into losing himself in details, is another question.

Portugal, as is well known, has the largest colonial possessions of all European countries, with the exception of England. While the mother country herself contains 1,659 square miles and 3,500,000 inhabitants, her colonies include 19,624 square miles and nearly 3,000,000 souls. In spite of this, with a national debt of only 21,000,000*l.*, the State income is not more than 3,000,000*l.*, and the annual budget regularly ends with a deficit of 250,000*l.* This cheerless state of finances can only be ascribed to incompetence or to dishonesty. From sheer native indolence, no attempt has yet been made to develop and improve the existing rich resources of a country peculiarly adapted, from its geographical position, for commerce, and gifted with an incomparable climate. Under these circumstances it cannot be wondered at that the Portuguese 3 per cents. are not higher than 48 on the London Stock Exchange, and can with difficulty be sold at that price. And yet a National Debt Commission, wholly independent of Government, has been labouring now for several years with praiseworthy zeal to secure the regular payment of interest.

It is plain from this state of things that the grant by the Cortes of an allowance for the Infanta bride can only be expected to be paid punctually, if no more is asked for than the finances of the State can afford.

For any dawdling and delays I beg to be excused. I am doing what I can to bring about a speedy settlement, and shall lose neither patience nor courage. The experiences of other diplomatists afford me little comfort. Sir H. Howard has been labouring for the last five months to obtain an Anglo-Portuguese Postal Convention, the principal terms of which have been arranged long ago. The only reason why it has not yet been concluded is that Loulé has never found time to answer an incidental question with a simple Yes or No. Count Moltke spent eight months in getting the treaty respecting the Sound dues signed, though the two Governments were entirely agreed in their views, and the Danish Minister resident had been assured on his arrival here that the matter would be settled in a few days.

This passive resistance, the result of an unexampled indolence, is all the more difficult to surmount, as it disguises itself under the most agreeable manners, and the most amiable excuses anticipate every reminder.

CHAPTER XIV.

LONDON.—1859.

Signing of Prince George's Treaty of Marriage—Return to London—The European Crisis—Napoleon's New Year's Reception of the Austrian Ambassador—Victor Emmanuel the real Creator of Italy—Napoleon and Cavour his Instruments—Opening of Parliament—England for Peace and Treaties—The Reform Bill—The Duke of Malakoff replaced by Persigny—Lord Cowley's Mission to Vienna—Equivocal Attitude of Napoleon—Suit for Prince George in Lisbon—His Marriage with the Infanta of Portugal—Return to London—Dissolution of Parliament—Austria's Ultimatum to Sardinia—Battle of Magenta—Fall of the Derby Ministry—Lord Palmerston Prime Minister—Battle of Solferino—Peace of Villafranca—Growing Distrust of Napoleon—His Embarrassments—Renewed Idea of a Congress—Prince Paul Esterházy—Situation in Germany after Villafranca.

On January 30, 1859, I succeeded in fulfilling the object of my mission to Lisbon, by signing, together with the Marquis de Loulé, the marriage treaty of Prince George. An accident at sea delayed my passage home. As the arrangements connected with the approaching marriage obliged me to go once more to Dresden, I was unable to resume my duties as Minister in London until March.

London is like a lofty watch tower, from which one overlooks the world. To an observer who has not studied closely the institutions, conditions, and leading personages of the Continent, the objects as seen from this bird's-eye perspective are very easily distorted. The want of such knowledge explains the perplexity which narrows the view of English statesmen as soon as an extraordinary European crisis occurs.

Spoiled by his insular position, absorbed by home questions and party struggles, the Englishman seldom has a clear idea of the situation, or of the passions and prejudices which influence it.

Rarely has the world, look where you may, been governed with less wisdom than during the first half of 1859. Folly and cowardice, the original sins of mankind, were conspicuous in every direction; and nowhere more than in Paris. The crowned Carbonaro was verifying daily more and more the truth of old Thiers' judgment, when he called him 'une médiocrité méconnue.' Like Goethe's 'Zauberlehrling,' he had lost the power of exorcising the evil spirit he had invoked. The incorrigible conspirator had first taken advantage at Stuttgart of the Russian Emperor's desire for revenge, to obtain his permission to liberate Italy from the so-called Austrian yoke. That Alexander II. consented to the scheme, was due chiefly to the blind hatred sworn by Prince Gortschakoff against Austria. The interview at Weimar could effect no change in the scheme itself; at the most it could only deceive the chivalrous Emperor Francis Joseph as to the intentions of the Russian Court. The Northern Alliance was irreparably broken, and the pledge of peace which it had offered was destroyed. The relations between Berlin and St. Petersburg remained, ostensibly at least, the same. But when, in October 1858, the Prince of Prussia formally assumed the Regency, and the philo-Russian Ministry of Manteuffel was succeeded by that of the 'new era,' there came a change that caused Napoleon just alarm. The Berlin Cabinet now took their tone from London, as they had formerly taken it from St. Petersburg. At Paris this new policy came as a surprise, and it was necessary to keep all the closer eye on England.

Napoleon meanwhile, at Plombières, had placed himself

entirely in the power of the only Sovereign who at that time knew what he wanted—Victor Emmanuel. This King possessed in Count Cavour a Minister, who cared nothing for either law or treaties, but who knew how to carry through his bold projects with the cunning of a Machiavelli. Just as the King of Sardinia looked down on his Minister and made him serviceable to his aims, so did Cavour regard the short-sighted Emperor of the French. Cavour, versed in every intrigue of Italian cunning, had soon perceived that the fear of death and the love of pleasure were the surest means of making Napoleon the blind tool of Victor Emmanuel. He confirmed the French Emperor in the belief that the liberation of Italy was the only means of protecting his life from the daggers and bombshells of his former fellow-conspirators. Without the knowledge of his own Ministers, Napoleon had, with unequalled *naïveté*, given promises *in writing*, which made Victor Emmanuel master of the situation. It was clear that this King had it quite in his power, following the example of his father, to resign the crown in case Napoleon should repent of keeping his promises. It was equally obvious, however, that the abdication of Victor Emmanuel, if publicly known to be due to a breach of faith by France, would unchain the Revolution in Italy and probably lead to the murder of Napoleon. But, at the same time, the crafty Piedmontese did not neglect another means of influencing the French Emperor, namely female diplomacy. It was generally known that Walewski, who was always on confidential relations with Thiers, had been warned by him against Italian *aventures* Thiers could not conceal his conviction that a united Italy would be an awkward neighbour to France. Walewski was entirely dependent on the favour enjoyed by his wife with the Emperor and Empress. He would have been overthrown and

replaced by Persigny had it not been for the successful homage of the Countess Walewska. Cavour's only hope of weakening her influence on the irresolute and fickle Napoleon was to engage the inflammable heart of the Emperor in another quarter. This was to be the task of the daughter of a Sardinian *diplomat*, as beautiful as she was cold, and she succeeded in accomplishing it. The Countess C—— was undeniably, if not the most beautiful, one of the most beautiful women of the century. Schooled in all the arts of female coquetry, she fascinated men by the contrast between her ice-cold temperament and her voluptuous beauty. Through her Cavour learnt everything that went on, not only in Paris, but also in the wavering mind of the Emperor, who was not always silent. All the contradictions between his words and deeds during the first few months of 1859 find an explanation in these snares, which were hidden at the time from the public eye.

Napoleon's ill-tempered remark to the Austrian Ambassador at his new year's reception, was invested by diplomacy and the Press with an importance which it scarcely deserved. Count Buol had committed the mistake of promoting Baron Hübner to the rank of Ambassador at Paris. That Prince Schwarzenberg should have accredited him to the French Republic at the end of 1848, was intelligible enough. Prince Metternich had employed him as Consul-General at Leipzig in the supervision of the German Press. Prince Schwarzenberg had entrusted him, as a good *rédacteur*, with the compilation of several State papers, and rewarded his services by unexpectedly raising him to the rank of envoy. Valuable as may have been his despatches in 1848 and 1849, when everything in Paris was unsettled, this *diplomat* did not suit Napoleon when Emperor. 'Je déteste Hübner,' said Napo-

leon in confidence one day; 's'il me demande quelque chose, je suis toujours tenté de le lui refuser.' No wonder that under these circumstances the Austrian Ambassador failed to adapt himself to the morbid whims of the Emperor of the French.

As regards the incident itself, it cannot be often enough repeated that there was no question of an actual *casus belli*. Whether Austria governed her Italian provinces well or badly, was a purely domestic question, which did not affect any foreign Government. Indeed, the Italians, in respect of their material interests, were the spoiled, not to say pampered, children of Metternich. The prosperity of those provinces had decidedly increased, and the rural population in particular could only bless the Austrian rule. In the towns, however, where a spirit of municipal Republicanism had always prevailed, the indiscreet conduct of the police served as a pretext for a factious agitation. The National idea, formulated in the vainglorious and impracticable phrase, 'l'Italia farà da se,' had been awakened, it is true, by some men of distinguished ability, such as Gioberti, Massimo d'Azeglio, Alfieri, and others; but, notwithstanding the activity of secret societies, it met with little appreciation or sympathy from the masses. These theoretical attempts to manufacture a united nation out of the fragments of so many nationalities, and notwithstanding the jealousy of so many townships, the House of Savoy, ever greedy of territory, took care to encourage and turn to practical account. The man who created Italy was not Cavour, but Victor Emmanuel. He combined with the cunning of the chamois hunter the most perfect good nature, and with the courage of the soldier the acuteness of a bold statesman. The future will do justice to this Sovereign, whom the present generation

fails to understand. Cavour, Rattazzi, Ricasoli, La Marmora, and others, whatever their names, were simply his puppets. About details he never troubled himself. The dirty work he left to his ministers. The constitutional forms, which had become indispensable, he observed as means to attain his own objects. Hence, as the representative of the National idea and of unity, he always held the reins of power, and remained dictator to the end of his life. That he reckoned Napoleon also among his marionettes is a fact of which the French Emperor, in his self-blindness, had no idea. A mediæval Condottiere, armed with the cunning of a Machiavelli, he alone was able to control the ferment, and construct at least a temporary edifice out of the heterogeneous materials at his command. He sacrificed his daughter and the cradle of his house, but he brought out Young Italy from the flames of the Revolution for himself and his son, in spite of Pope and Emperor.

Count Buol was not equal to coping with the threatening storm, although public opinion in Germany and England declared decidedly for Austria and against France. He failed to effect an understanding with Berlin, and to arrange in time a joint action with the Bund for the defence of the line of the Mincio. Austria exposed herself to suspicions, and gave Prussia a pretext for waiting on events, and ultimately demanding a high price for her coveted aid. The lamentable financial condition of the Austrian Empire made it urgently important to effect a speedy settlement of the crisis so wantonly provoked by France. The Constitution was suspended, and the Hungarian portion of the Empire offended and paralysed by Bach's attempts at Germanising. It became, therefore, more difficult every day to find the money which was necessary to maintain the army in Italy on

a war footing. Unhappily the feeling in all the provinces was so hostile to the existing Ministry, that a victory of the army would have been regarded by many as almost a political misfortune. Under such circumstances there was need of the greatest caution, and a waiting policy was the only proper one. But could they wait, without utterly exhausting themselves? That was the question, on the answer to which everything depended.

Hardly anyone can now doubt that a real statesman in Vienna had it then completely in his power, not only to stifle the agitation in Piedmont, but also to prepare the doom of the second French Empire. Germany loudly demanded to march on Paris, and wrest Alsace and Lorraine from the French. That the power was there to do so is shown not only by the campaign of 1870, but by that of 1859.

However that may be, the spectre of an Anglo-German coalition left Napoleon's bad conscience no rest. He had embarked on a policy of adventure on his own authority and behind the backs of his Ministers, and put himself into the hands of Victor Emmanuel. He now shrank back at the effect caused by his new year's reception of the Austrian Ambassador, and especially at the echo which his unconsidered words found in Turin, where the King officially formulated the grievances of Italy in his Speech from the Throne. The funds sank so ominously that the Stock Exchange speculators about Napoleon began to tremble, and urgently begged him to relieve them. A quieting article appeared in the 'Moniteur,' which failed, however, to produce any lasting impression.

Such was the dangerous state of things on the Continent when Queen Victoria on February 3 opened Parliament, and insisted in her Speech from the Throne on the sanctity of treaties. So general was the distrust of France, so earnest the

desire for the maintenance of peace, that even Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell found themselves compelled, in the course of the debate on the Address, to suppress their sympathies with the Revolution in Italy, and vie with Derby, Malmesbury, and Disraeli in protesting energetically against any infringement of treaties.

The echo had not to be waited for long. On February 7, the Emperor Napoleon opened the Chambers with a speech intended to revive the half-forgotten 'l'Empire c'est la paix.'

The English Government had honestly advocated peace and the legitimate claims of Austria; but they were weak and conscious of their weakness. The internal situation in England was deplorable, notwithstanding the prosperous state of trade. Seldom had the Parliamentary system appeared in a darker light. A so-called Conservative Cabinet was at the helm. Not one of its members imagined for a moment that a reform of Parliament, involving an extension of the franchise, was either desired by the country or could do the country any good. Nevertheless, the Ministers were compelled, against their better convictions, to bring in a measure of that kind in obedience to their pledge.

In the midst of a crisis such as that which was then threatening Europe, and in the presence of a neighbour whose faithlessness was notorious, the Tories were forced to prepare a Reform Bill, which, as they knew beforehand, would not be radical enough for the Radicals. The Ministry contained two men who were too honest to join in this game of brag. Walpole and Henley declared that they could not reconcile it to their consciences to introduce themselves a Bill the provisions of which, if proposed by their opponents, they would have strenuously resisted. Both of these men were highly respected, not only by their own

party, but by all sections of the House of Commons. The retirement was, therefore, a severe blow to the Cabinet, in which the Opportunists, as they would now be called, composed the majority. The latter purchased their brief respite dearly enough. Lord John Russell, annoyed at Disraeli's having fished in his own waters, carried an amendment on March 31 by a majority of thirty-nine. The Ministers found themselves obliged to resort to a dissolution.

These lamentable proceedings in Parliament necessarily paralysed the action of England on behalf of peace.

Already, in November 1858, Napoleon had invited Palmerston and Clarendon to Compiègne. Perhaps both of them afterwards repented of having accepted the invitation. The Emperor's object was to prepare the overthrow of the Tory Ministry, and utilise to his best advantage Lord Palmerston's sympathies with the Italian Revolution. Clarendon boasted of not having withheld the truth from the Emperor, but Palmerston returned to London more French than ever, and began in the 'Morning Post' a campaign against the Ministers in favour of France and Italy. Incredible as it seems, it is a well-known fact, and one which has been confirmed by his own avowal, that Napoleon communicated to the editor of the 'Morning Post' extracts from Lord Malmesbury's private letters and despatches, with directions to forge weapons out of them against that Minister. By such arts did Napoleon conspire with ex-ministers and journalists against the Derby Government, whose honesty was a thorn in the flesh to him. He did not scruple to play out Persigny once more as his ambassador, although Malmesbury had declared that he had no wish to have any more dealings with this indiscreet agent of Palmerston. The answer returned to the question whether the choice of Persigny would be agreeable to the Queen, was

certainly not very flattering to Napoleon's confidant. 'Anyone whom the Emperor sends will be agreeable to us,' was the reply. When the French *chargé d'affaires* expressed his surprise at this laconic message, Malmesbury shrugged his shoulders and comforted him by saying, 'All the easier for you to telegraph our answer.'

The Duke of Malakoff had been able to contribute little to an understanding between the Western Powers. This rough soldier understood little of diplomacy. The reserve imposed upon him, he soon laid aside. A Lord Mayor's dinner gave him an opportunity of expressing his enthusiastic admiration of the British troops in the Crimea. Walewski left the Marshal destitute of any news, and the latter took revenge by openly deriding the French policy, especially his Emperor's Quixotic idea of wishing to figure as a general. Pélissier's wife, a beautiful Spaniard, related to the Empress Eugénie, understood neither French nor English when she came to London, and could, therefore, add little lustre to the Embassy. Many anecdotes were current about the Marshal and his uncouth soldierly expressions, and the *attachés* and secretaries were glad to be soon rid of him again. He never liked civilians, and once sent for his aide-de-camp to read him a lecture for an oversight of duty. The lecture ended with the words, not very flattering to the other officials, 'Et je vous dis tout cela devant ces pékins pour vous faire plus honte.' The Queen was sometimes amused with his *brusqueries*. He was decidedly popular in society, although he seldom showed himself. With all his roughness, Pélissier was good-natured. Gudin, the marine painter, assured me that he had read sentimental verses written by him. On taking leave of the Queen he is said to have had an emotional fit of this kind, and to have literally burst into tears. The command of the army

of the Rhine, which was intended to sugar the pill of his recall, appeared to give him little consolation.

Persigny, shortly after his arrival, was far from comfortable about the result of the impending war. He openly opposed the Derby Ministry, and touted formally in all the drawing-rooms for Palmerston. He was actually accused of not having scorned to stoop to bribery after the dissolution of Parliament, a questionable method of support, to say the least, and one which ultimately did France no good. Even if Persigny helped in some degree to bring Palmerston back to power, the result was of little use to Napoleon, since the English Premier, after the annexation of Savoy and Nice, renounced the friendship in a manner that showed plainly his resentment.

Meanwhile, Lord Malmesbury remained zealous in his efforts on behalf of peace. Lord Cowley had been instructed to proceed with that object on a confidential mission to Vienna. The choice was an excellent one. Cowley, who had been before at Frankfort, knew the relations of Germany very well, and had studied *ab ovo* and in all its details the pending complication in Paris. He was sufficiently acquainted with Napoleon, and to a certain point enjoyed his confidence. The English Ambassador first inquired at Paris on what conditions the maintenance of peace appeared possible. Four points were then established at a personal interview with the Emperor, which Cowley at once submitted to his Government at home. With the view of recommending the Austrian Cabinet to accept them, he repaired on February 24 to Vienna. Malmesbury doubted the success of his mission; but nevertheless it succeeded to a certain point. The Austrian Cabinet showed themselves more conciliatory than had been expected in Paris. When Lord Cowley returned after about

three weeks to his post, he found, to his astonishment, that Napoleon was disinclined to rest content with the concessions made by Austria. Gortschakoff now came forward, as the *compère* of the Imperial juggler, with the proposal of a European Congress for regulating the affairs of Italy. On this basis new and unpromising negotiations were developed. The telegraph was worked busily in all directions, and the confusion reached its highest pitch. Napoleon could hardly have seriously desired a Congress. He was anxious, in the first place, to gain time to complete his own preparations; secondly, to tempt Austria into flinging aside the sorely tried patience imposed upon her by the desperate state of her finances; but thirdly, and mainly, to await the return of Palmerston to power. The English Government detected the perfidy of this policy, but nevertheless entered into the idea of a Congress, and endeavoured also to induce Austria to do the same. The Vienna Cabinet with perfect propriety proposed the disarmament of Sardinia as the condition of entering the Congress, and accepted afterwards, as proposed by England, a general disarmament, being unwilling to disarm herself alone, and then, in the event of the Congress breaking up, find herself taken by surprise unguarded.[1] But little Piedmont would not disarm, and Napoleon for a long time refused to require her to do so. Cavour was ordered to Paris. After having seen Walewski, he was anxious to return at once, despairing of success. Thereupon he was sent for by the Emperor, who reassured him and proved to him anew that the policy of Napoleon and that of the French Cabinet were two totally different things.

Amidst these kaleidoscopic changes of the situation, in which hopes of peace alternated almost hourly with fears of

[1] See circular despatch of Lord Malmesbury of May 4, 1859.

war, Baron Beust summoned me to Paris, where I met him on April 21. He had originally intended to undertake himself the task of suing for the hand of the Infanta in Lisbon. Foreseeing, however, that events might necessitate his speedy return home, he had asked the King to grant him two letters of credentials, one for himself, and the other eventually for me. The news he found awaiting him in Paris determined him not to undertake the mission, which was now handed over to me. Several officers, who had been selected to accompany me, were ordered to rejoin their regiments, mobilisation having been decided on.

I returned accordingly at once to London, together with the Councillor of Legation, Richard von Könneritz, and Count Charles Hohenthal-Püchau, with the view of embarking shortly afterwards at Southampton. Before leaving London, I was invited to dinner by the Queen and Prince Albert, in order to discuss with them the necessary arrangements for the newly married couple on their journey home. The Queen was extremely anxious to see them both in London, and kindly invited them to Buckingham Palace.

In Lisbon, meanwhile, the Duke of Terceira had succeeded the Marquis de Loulé as Foreign Minister. A few days afterwards Prince George arrived and put up at the Belem Palace, which had been already prepared for the young couple. The marriage was celebrated on the 11th. Two days later we went on board the Portuguese man-of-war, on which the Duke of Oporto brought us to Southampton.

During my absence from London, matters had taken a decided change. Parliament had been dissolved. The elections had not gone as the Ministers wished. Austria had lost patience, and sent a peremptory summons to Turin (April 23) demanding the immediate disarmament of Sardinia, and

allowing three days for a reply. Public opinion in England, regardless of the urgent financial difficulties of Austria, had pronounced so decidedly against this measure, that even Lord Derby publicly branded it as criminal. The friends of Austria hoped that the now unavoidable war would be conducted with vigour and energy, and that Piedmont would be defeated before France could come to her assistance. But Radetzky was dead, Hess had grown old, and Gyulai was no general. Thus Austria's conduct of the war was on a par with her diplomacy. The Ticino, indeed, was crossed, but instead of making a rapid march on Turin and annihilating the Piedmontese army on the way, precious time was wasted, the French were allowed to pass the Alps unmolested, and a retreat was made, with the view of awaiting the enemy's attack on Austrian soil. Thus the brave troops were worn out and demoralised with marches and countermarches, and the campaign was morally lost before it began.

After a few unimportant skirmishes of outposts, came on June 4 the battle of Magenta. On that day it was made evident that the conduct of the campaign had been quite as faulty on the part of the French and Piedmontese as on that of the Austrians. As the Duke of Malakoff had predicted, Napoleon's presence on the battle-field was a mere embarrassment. Instead of animating his troops, like Victor Emmanuel, by the example of his brilliant bravery, this phantom Emperor rode irresolutely here and there, and was within a hair's breadth of being captured, together with his escort, by Count Clam's Uhlans, when he was rescued by MacMahon. This general's appearance decided in favour of the allies the battle which, apparently at least, had been won by the Austrians. How indecisive was the whole affair, is shown by Napoleon's own candid confession. 'Vous aviez gagné la bataille de

Magenta,' said the Emperor a few weeks afterwards to Prince Metternich, 'mais puisque vos généraux ne s'en doutaient pas, je me suis empressé de télégraphier à Paris que c'était moi qui avais remporté la victoire.' Thus history is made.

The French and Piedmontese won a more decisive victory a few days afterwards in the English Parliament, which was opened by the Queen on June 7. In the early morning of the 11th the Derby Ministry was defeated by a majority of thirteen on a direct vote of want of confidence. The Queen, with the object of forming a moderate Government, sent at first for Lord Granville. To the surprise of everyone, this business-like but colourless statesman undertook to form a Cabinet. The next morning the 'Times' contained a detailed account of what had passed between the Queen and him. The smart editor of the City paper had 'interviewed' the noble Lord in American fashion. 'Lord Granville,' so ran the article, 'will remain all his life that clever young man whom we all know; but he is not strong enough to form a Ministry at such a critical time as this.' The 'Times' had judged correctly. Lord Granville retired.

Between Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell there still prevailed the old difference of opinion as to Parliamentary reform, which the latter was resolved to urge on, and the former to delay. Lord Palmerston's home policy was in unison with that of the old Tory party. His opinion was, that the country had already slipped more than was necessary down the crooked slope of democracy. He felt, however, that it was his duty, as leader of the Liberal party, to take account of the Liberal movements and *velléités* which had now for once become dominant among the English people. Like Canning, he sought, therefore, to make himself popular by supporting, or at least sympathising with, all revolutionary movements

abroad, and then employed his popularity in keeping the Revolution away from England and holding the Radical party in check. This game, however morally indefensible, was the secret of Palmerston's policy, and he played it for a whole generation with tact and skill on the principle of 'après nous le déluge.'

Lord John Russell, a younger brother of the Duke of Bedford, was at bottom more honest than Palmerston. The old Whig maxim, 'Everything for, and nothing through, the people,' was certainly not always his. As to whether the extension of the franchise that he advocated was suitable and well-timed, he cared little. Reform was his hobby, and the little man was now too old to choose another. He favoured foreign revolutions like Palmerston, but with this difference, that he did not deny to any Government the right of putting them down. In his view everything depended on success. If the Government conquered, the Government was right; and it was the same with the Revolution. Unacquainted with foreign relations and the forms of diplomacy, Lord John Russell was a Liberal *doctrinaire*. He looked on the British Constitution as an inimitable masterpiece, the introduction of which was bound to bring prosperity and blessings to every country on the earth, no matter what its stage of civilisation. Though often blustering and passionate, he was kind and good-natured, without forgetting, however, out of good-nature, his own or his country's advantage. Taking the hint given by the witty Bernal Osborne, he had come to an agreement with Lord Palmerston, that either of the two should serve under the other, in case the Queen should entrust to one of them the formation of the new Government.

Lord Granville having failed to form a Cabinet, the Queen had only to choose between Lord John Russell and Lord

Palmerston." The task was entrusted to Lord Palmerston. He was preferable, inasmuch as he was better acquainted with European affairs, was more energetic, and also enjoyed to a higher degree the confidence of the public and of the House of Commons. The only difficulty lay in the distribution of offices. Palmerston would have much preferred to have Lord Clarendon at the Foreign Office, although the latter sympathised far less passionately with the Revolution in Italy, and saw through Napoleon much more clearly than did his chief. Lord John Russell, however, refused to resign the leadership of the House of Commons unless he was appointed Foreign Secretary. Palmerston, therefore, had nothing left but to gratify his wish, in the hope of finding his inexperienced colleague more pliant than Lord Clarendon.

The task of filling up the other posts in the Cabinet was easy, since Gladstone, although he had not concurred in the vote of want of confidence, declared his readiness to accept the Chancellorship of the Exchequer, and there was no want of capable materials in the Liberal party. The Radicals were not exactly edified by this highly aristocratic Ministry. It contained three dukes besides the brother of the Duke of Bedford. Palmerston, however, ruled the roost. Persigny and D'Azeglio were in high glee, having found at length a willing ear for all their insinuations and intrigues.

Palmerston had been only six days in office when he had the satisfaction of receiving the news of the French victory at Solferino (June 24). This battle was one of those which was decisive from a political, but indecisive from a military, point of view. The Austrians, after extraordinary losses, quitted the battle-field in perfect order, and without leaving any trophies in the conquerors' hands. Benedek had dealt the Piedmontese a mortal blow. The French army was so far exhausted,

that no thoughts could be entertained of following up the enemy. In view of the fact that the Quadrilateral was still intact, Napoleon thought it necessary to ask for an armistice.

Of the battle of Solferino, several contradictory versions were current. According to the unanimous verdict of the English officers who were present in the Austrian and French headquarters at this murderous conflict, the Austrian troops of all ranks fought admirably, while the French only purchased victory by the sacrifice of their *corps d'élite*. The generalship was as defective on the one side as on the other. The presence of both Emperors served only to increase the confusion. The last fact was confirmed to me a few weeks after the event by Count Schlik in Dresden. This brave cavalry officer, who had been entrusted only on the day before the battle with the chief command in place of Gyulai, had had no time to make the necessary dispositions. Thus the Austrian army had been made to take up a position which impartial strategists condemned as untenable. 'The worst was,' Schlik said to me, 'that I could take little care of the battle on that disastrous day. My constant business was to prevent my Emperor from exposing himself too much. He was always where the shells were bursting most thickly.'

At the first news of the armistice (July 7), Persigny received a project of peace consisting of three points, together with instructions to play it out as a proposal of mediation on the part of England and Prussia. The terms suggested were the cession of Lombardy to Sardinia, and the independence of Venetia under an archduke. The fear, which the French Ambassador did not conceal from me, that Napoleon, by continuing the war, was hazarding his crown and empire, amply explains Persigny's intrigues. Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell promised to support these terms, but on con-

dition that the Queen, who was then staying at the camp at Aldershot (July 10), approved of them. It was, therefore, a manifest falsehood when Persigny telegraphed to the Emperor, that the English Government had actually agreed to put them forward as proposals of mediation in concert with Prussia. No such thing had ever been talked of. The Queen and Prince Albert were decidedly averse to demanding the surrender of Venetia from Austria, who, if she had lost a battle, was still in possession of the fortresses. The Government, therefore, as such, never entered into Persigny's project, and had no idea of inviting Prussia to take part in a mediation on this basis. Persigny's telegram, nevertheless, was a welcome means of negotiation in the hands of the French Emperor.

Neither the French nor the Austrian Emperor could have seen with indifference the countless victims of this bloody campaign on the ghastly battle-field of Solferino. Both desired, therefore, to bring the unhappy war to an end. The beaten army was less threatened, being under the protection of their fortresses, than the victorious one. The latter had lost not only its best troops, but also a disproportionately large number of officers, and was suffering from the drought occasioned by the unusual heat as well as from the marked hostility of the population. In addition to that, Napoleon was well aware that he had not only to deal with the Austrian army, which had retreated in good order, and with the almost impregnable Quadrilateral. The German armies were ready to march, and Pélissier was not strong enough to prevent the Prussian troops from pushing forward on Paris. In the event of a declaration of war by the German Bund, Napoleon would have been obliged to retire across the Alps without achieving the object of his campaign. It was therefore of vital import-

ance to conclude peace on the terms of *uti possidetis*. Though he had promised to the Piedmontese the 'freedom of Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic,' and proclaimed this in his manifesto of war, he saw now that to carry out his programme must infallibly expose him to the dangers of a European coalition. Of two evils, the less seemed to him a breach of his word. Accordingly he despatched a trusted agent, General Fleury, behind the backs of his allies to the Austrian headquarters, with instructions to invite the Emperor Francis Joseph to a personal meeting at Villafranca. This chivalrous monarch had been gradually convinced of the incompetence of his ministers and generals, and the sufferings of his brave army had torn his heart. He consented, therefore, to the proposed interview. At this meeting, where no witnesses were present, the main points of the preliminaries of peace were agreed on between the two Emperors direct. As was to have been expected; Persigny's telegram played the chief part in this discussion. The Emperor Francis Joseph, far too high-minded to think such perfidy possible, concluded peace under the impression that Napoleon was really, as he boasted, imposing more favourable terms than those which the mediating Powers, England and Prussia, would have demanded of him. He attached great weight to the assurance that his relatives, who were under his protection, the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and the Dukes of Modena and Parma, as well as the Pope, should suffer no loss of territory. But the chief reason that induced the Emperor to sacrifice Lombardy, was the financial straits of the Empire, which were insisted on so urgently by Baron von Bruck. The unpleasant discovery of considerable embezzlements may also have contributed not a little to demonstrate the necessity of administrative reform, which could only be effected in time of peace.

The preliminaries of Villafranca surprised all the world, and especially the Prince of Prussia, who was prepared for war and ready to come to Austria's assistance. The keenest disappointment, of course, was felt in the Italian camp. Cavour behaved like a child, tendered his resignation, and railed against Napoleon's breach of faith. Victor Emmanuel showed himself more statesmanlike and shrewd. He accepted Lombardy as an instalment, in confident expectation that the rest would follow. This king had the peculiar good fortune of always gaining something by losing battles. Beaten at Solferino, he acquired Lombardy; while the defeats at Custozza and Lissa brought him in seven years afterwards the kingdom of Venetia. Cavour's resignation was for Victor Emmanuel merely an incident, and failed to make him swerve for a moment from his course of national policy. The Quixotic idea of an Italian Confederation under the presidency of the Pope was laughed at by this practical prince. He never troubled himself to dissipate such dreams. The Lombards hated the Piedmontese. Milan was jealous of Turin. The King could only hope to achieve a moral conquest of this newly acquired province, by making Italian unity serve to reconcile provincial jealousies. That Napoleon had agreed to the restoration of the princes who had been driven out by the Revolution, was a matter also of thorough indifference to Victor Emmanuel. He knew that all these apples had only to ripen, in order to drop of themselves into his own hands. If genius consists of patience, as the English say, the King of Sardinia showed at this moment more genius than his Minister who resigned.

In England there prevailed the deepest uneasiness and the most decided distrust of Napoleon. The Derby Ministry had resolved on an important strengthening of the navy, and

complied in this respect with the patriotic demands of the Court. The Volunteer movement also, which had found a warm supporter from its commencement in Prince Albert, and which led to the spontaneous formation of rifle corps in all the towns and counties of England, received the sanction and encouragement of the Government. Even the French-loving Palmerston was not behind the Tories in his zeal for this movement, which sprang into existence from the threats of the French colonels.

It was soon seen that Napoleon's dreams of an Italian confederation were just as impracticable as some other stipulations of the peace preliminaries of Villafranca. Harassed and perplexed by the daily increasing difficulties occasioned by his policy, he took refuge again in the idea of a Congress as a plausible means of escape from the contradictions in which his want of foresight had involved him. Once more the sound common-sense of Prince Albert opened the eyes of the English Ministers, and saved them from the folly of pulling the Italian chestnuts out of the fire for the French.

Before the plenipotentiaries of Austria and France met at Zürich, to embody the aphorisms of Villafranca into a formal treaty, the Austrian Emperor had been anxious to come to a private understanding with the English Court. His Ambassador, Count Apponyi, was not equal to that task. A veteran of Austrian diplomacy was chosen, Prince Paul Esterházy, one of the most distinguished pupils of the then deceased Prince Metternich. While Apponyi was so grieved at the disasters in Italy that the Queen herself had to comfort and encourage him, it was a real pleasure to see the old Prince Paul bearing high the Austrian banner in London with the freshness and confidence of youth. He was the type of a greater, if not a

better, time. 'J'en ai vu bien d'autres,' he constantly repeated, to remind those about him that it was not the moment then for hanging down one's head.

I saw the Prince a few hours after his arrival at Chandos House. Apponyi asked him shyly whether his Highness desired an invitation to a Court concert the next evening. 'Do not trouble yourself,' replied the Prince. 'I went immediately after my arrival to Prince Albert and sat with him for two hours. He invited me himself to the concert, and made me promise also to dine the next day with the Queen.'

Prince Esterházy had become terribly deaf, and spoke in such a loud voice that it was hardly possible to hold any serious conversation with him in society. But it was amusing to see how thoroughly at home he felt. He knew everybody. His appearance at Buckingham Palace made quite a stir. The hearty 'How do you do?' with which he greeted his old friends quite rang through the large halls, and more than once he added, 'How glad I am to see you! I thought you were dead long ago.'

The Queen herself said to me that evening, 'I have been so pleased to see Prince Paul again. It is an agreeable reminder of the days of my childhood. If only he wouldn't shout so terribly. You cannot speak a word with him without everybody hearing it.'

On the veteran who had negotiated with Napoleon I. and Talleyrand, and counted Wellington and Castlereagh among his most intimate friends, it was only natural that none of the present generation should make much impression. He had treated Lord Palmerston and Lord John, at the commencement of their career, as his inferiors, and he treated them now in much the same way. Of a Congress, of course, he would hear nothing. The matter was settled. What

remained to be done would be looked after by Colloredo and Karolyi at Zürich.

I had several opportunities at that time of explaining to Prince Esterházy my views of affairs in England, and I was pleased to hear afterwards that he had said he largely agreed with them. From London he went to Paris, where I met him after the Session. With his sound and pertinent judgment on Napoleon's *régime*, I could only express my absolute concurrence.

During my leave of absence I spent some weeks in Dresden, in order to acquaint myself in some degree with the state of things in Germany. The short but bloody campaign in Italy had produced the most lamentable results. People there, looking only at Napoleon's success, overrated his power. The deep-rooted distrust of his policy was shared by all parties alike. There were no traces of any desire for another Rhenish Confederation. On the contrary, there was a general feeling of uncertainty and weakness. Barren recriminations between Vienna and Berlin had only embittered the old rivalry. Austria complained of having been left in the lurch by her natural allies, and her partisans held the Berlin Cabinet responsible for the passive attitude of Germany. In Prussia, all the blame was cast on the thwarting policy of the Vienna Cabinet, and their tendency to treat the Great Power of Northern Germany rather as a vassal than an ally. It was stated that at the two decisive moments, at the beginning and the end of the war, the Austrian negotiators sent to Berlin had been surprised by the action of their own Government. In point of fact, the Archduke Albert had protested against sending the ultimatum to Turin, and quitted Berlin in the hope of preventing it. In like manner Prince Windischgrätz had urgently warned against a premature con-

clusion of peace, and, on his warnings being disregarded, had left Berlin with the object of his journey unfulfilled. Equally sterile had been the mission of the Prussian General von Willisen to Vienna.

Count Buol was forced to bow to the storm, and hand over the Foreign Ministry to Count Bernhard von Rechberg, the Austrian Minister Plenipotentiary to the Bund, and President of the Diet since 1855. Belonging to a family formerly immediate of the Empire, and holding property in Bavaria and Würtemberg, Rechberg was a foreigner and without roots in the country of his adoption. The financial embarrassments, which had increased since the suicide of Bruck, peremptorily urged the necessity of reverting to constitutional paths.

The disastrous Italian campaign dissipated to some extent the nimbus with which Schwarzenberg and Radetzky had invested the Empire. It was only natural that the eyes of German patriots should turn again to Berlin. The conviction, which had been slumbering for the last ten years, that Prussia alone could protect Germany against French ambition, obtained new adherents. The *National Verein*,[1] then in process of formation, soon became the organ of these aspirations. But the most important thing was that the fruitless mobilisation of the Prussian army had revealed to the Prince Regent the faults and shortcomings of the Prussian military system, and confirmed the observations he had made during the Baden campaign of 1849. Thus out of this costly preparation for war grew the fixed resolve to replace the existing organisation of the Prussian army by a new one, better adapted to its purposes.

[1] The object of this National League, as it was called, was to put Prussia, to the exclusion of Austria, at the head of Germany.—Ed.

CHAPTER XV.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.—1859.

Lisbon, Jan. 28: Political Parties in Portugal—Ministerial Crisis—Conclusion of the Negotiations for the Marriage Treaty of Prince George of Saxony.—London, March 2: Impressions in Paris—The Emperor Napoleon and Italy—Conversations with the Austrian Ambassador—Antonelli's 'Move.'—London, March 3: Audience of Prince Albert; his Judgment on the 'Crime' planned by Napoleon with Cavour; his Advice respecting Austria and Germany.—London, March 20: Austria's conditional Acceptance of the Proposal of a Congress—Lord Derby's Hopes of Peace.—London, March 24: A Mistake explained—The Congress proposed by Russia, not by France.—London, March 27: Disarmament of Sardinia—Napoleon's ambiguous Assurances—Gloomy Symptoms.—London, March 30: Malmesbury's Reply to Clarendon's Question—Russia's Invitation to the Congress—Acceptance of the English Conditions.—London, April 6: The Congress doubtful—Ministerial Crisis in England—Cavour refuses to disarm.—London, April 8: The Ministers declare a Debate on the Question of War or Peace to be inconvenient to the Public Interest—Rumours of War.—London, April 11: Threatening Aspect of Affairs—Malmesbury's Optimism—Conversation with Brunnow.—London, April 16: Recapitulation of the Negotiations—Lord John Russell's Speech to his Constituents.—Lisbon, May 6: The solemn Suit for the Hand of the Infanta of Portugal.

Lisbon: Jan. 28, 1859.

SINCE the Bill concerning the dowry of the Infanta was agreed to unanimously and without discussion by the Chamber of Deputies on the 24th, and in the same gratifying manner by the Peers on the 26th, the negotiations as to the marriage treaty have so far prospered, that in a couple of days we may hope to see the treaty signed. If so, this result, unprecedented in the annals of Portugal, will be due

to a special dispensation of Providence. For under such unfavourable circumstances as the present, a transaction of this kind has hardly ever been completed in six weeks.

The Ministry since the day of its formation has been in a constant state of dissolution. Its history is one unbroken crisis. All attempts to complete it have hitherto failed. The Marquis de Loulé and Count d'Avila belong to different political parties. The latter is a Chartist, that is a supporter, in a strictly monarchical sense, of the Charter granted by Dom Pedro, while Loulé belongs to the extreme Liberal party, which is called—I have never learnt why—the historical party. There is no question of Radicalism. De Loulé would be sorely puzzled if he were asked as to his political creed. He lacks neither good intentions nor tact and sound common-sense; but a Minister with less idea of business than the indolent and forgetful Marquis, it would be difficult to find. He disarms his adversaries by an ingenuousness bordering on *naïvéte*. Thus he was lately reminded in the Chamber of Peers of the Junta of Oporto, of which he was a member, and whose open rebellion against Queen Maria da Gloria was only put down by the intervention of Sir H. Seymour. Far from being in the least embarrassed by these reminiscences, the Prime Minister observed that he esteemed it the highest honour to have belonged to that revolutionary brotherhood. Another time he was asked—and it was well known that he was Grand Master of the Freemasons in Portugal—whether he belonged to any secret society. Although all secret societies, and especially the Freemasons, are forbidden by law in Portugal, the Marquis did not hesitate to answer the question in the affirmative. In spite, however, of all these incongruities, Loulé is extremely popular, not only in the Cortes, but in the

country, while from his love of truth, and, perhaps, from his very indolence, he suits the young King, who likes him. Were the Marquis to fall, the King and country would probably relapse under the rule of the *Regeneradores*, whose aim is to regenerate Portugal under the leadership of the old Duke of Saldanha—a party who profess to be more Conservative than the present Ministry, and boast that of the fifteen Revolutions experienced by Portugal during the last fourteen years, they have not caused as many as Loulé and his friends. The *Regeneradores* reject the notion of a Coalition Ministry, counting, as they do, on the speedy accession of their leader, whose ambition is boundless, but whose honesty, according to our German ideas, is open to doubt. In England, Saldanha would be called an old humbug. Here people are afraid of him, since the few who are at all fit for posts in the Ministry are his adherents. The only statesman in the country, Count Thomar, the chief of the Conservative party, had become for the present impossible since Saldanha's last *pronunciamiento*. Nothing was left, therefore, but to let the machine of Government remain for the time inactive, by putting its management nominally into the hands of Loulé.

However, there is a limit to everything, even to Portuguese patience. 'Interpellations' beyond number urge the completion of the Cabinet. The majority, who have hitherto kept the Premier in power, are said to have already threatened to desert him in the Chamber of Deputies if an end is not put at once to the present state of things. The Minister of Finance himself confessed to me to-day that there is a regular Ministerial crisis. Count d'Avila is, therefore, doubly proud of having settled the question of the Infanta's dowry in the Cortes, as a change of Ministry would have occasioned endless delay.

London: March 2, 1859.

As a rule the impressions received by a three days' stay in Paris are kaleidoscopic and contradictory. It must, therefore, be regarded as a symptom of an abnormal state of things if the same picture reappears always in different colours, the same course of ideas in conversations with utterly different people.

At the present moment a sinister apprehension is weighing, like a nightmare, on the minds of all. It is feared that the fate of France and the immediate future of Europe are resting in the hands of a man whose mind has lost its balance, whose high-flying projects have become idiosyncrasies, his firmness of character obstinacy, and his personal courage benumbed into a blind fatalism by his terror at real or imaginary dangers. *Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*

What struck me most of all that I saw in Paris, was the Emperor's changed appearance. I saw his Majesty, surrounded by several aides-de-camp, in the Champs-Elysées. I had some trouble in recognising in the horseman bowed, and staring fixedly before him, and hanging apparently powerless in his saddle, the ruler whose dignity, scarcely a twelvemonth ago, was so impressive, and whose smile was so bewitching. He looked at least ten years older. Of the thousands whom the spring air had tempted out of doors, not one appeared to notice the monarch, at least not one saluted him. In Paris terror reigns supreme: the Emperor fears assassins, the Ministers and Generals fear the Emperor. *Et la peur ne raisonne pas.* No one has the Emperor's ear unless it be Prince Napoleon, whose growing influence foreshadows rather than conceals ambitious plans. All France desires peace, but offers only a mute resistance to her silent

monarch. Never has speech been more free, or the press more servile, than at present.

War in Italy is a certainty, only it is to be no second edition of the epopee of Marengo, but a mere mock contest, a *coup de théâtre*.

An English friend, whose official position made him speak with authority, described the situation as follows: 'It is not possible to build a second Louvre. The park in the Bois de Boulogne is finished. The *loi des suspects* has been a failure. Every resource has been exhausted. Napoleon thinks it is only on the battle-field that he can re-establish his position, undermined as it is on all sides. As for what comes next, he cares not a jot. If victorious, he would settle the fate of Italy, perhaps satisfy his now troublesome cousin with the Iron Crown, and claim nothing for France herself. This is his plan. If he fails, all is lost. It is the usual game of this Imperial adventurer to stake everything on one throw. Industry is suffering from the pressure of uncertainty. Why should that trouble him? On the contrary, so much the better! How could these *intérêts infimes* of a nation of thirty-five millions presume to cross the monarch's secret plans? Every obstacle only urges him further forward. Every concession encourages him to demand more. He welcomes every pretext for hurrying matters to a crisis. Do not allow,' concluded the Englishman, 'the now awakened national feeling in Germany to go to sleep again. Nothing but prompt and unanimous action can save Europe from a new Bonapartist deluge. Nothing but the union of the German Governments can preserve or, at least, soon restore peace. The Rhine must be defended in Italy. As long as a Bonaparte sits upon the throne of France, every Great Power should have at least 150,000 men prepared to march.'

The Austrian Ambassador, whom I went to see the evening before my departure, laid his views before me with great candour. He fully approves of Cardinal Antonelli's demand that Austria and France should evacuate the Papal States. At the French Foreign Ministry this demand is regarded as a complication endangering the maintenance of peace. The quieting assurances which the Duc de Gramont has had to make in the name of the Emperor Napoleon, have produced and are bound to produce at Rome a diametrically opposite effect, inasmuch as he spoke always of the Pope personally, and not of the Holy See. In the event of a Franco-Austrian war, the personal position of the Pope would certainly seem to be threatened if the French garrison were left in Rome. Moreover, the contemplated removal of the Curia to Avignon might appear such a serious eventuality, as to make it preferable to let matters proceed to open revolution. Baron Hübner in no way underrated this latter danger. He considers war inevitable, not so much on account of the Emperor's position at home—Napoleon being obliged to swim against the stream of public opinion—but from the binding promises he seems to have made to the leaders of the Italian Revolution. The Austrian Ambassador's main anxiety lies in the political, not the military, aspect of the threatened conflict. Everything, in his opinion, depends on the Austrian Cabinet's contriving and commencing the war under the most favourable conditions possible. I represented to him the fear lest Napoleon should pervert Lord Cowley's mission to Vienna into a means of depriving the English Government of their freedom of action by barren negotiations. On this point, however, Baron Hübner spoke with the fullest confidence in the personal qualities of his British colleague, who, notwithstanding his intimate relations

with the French Court, is too straightforward, he says, not to condemn in plain terms the present policy of Napoleon.

London: March 3, 1859.

My first care on returning was to obtain an audience of Prince Albert. He has now more than ever the threads of high politics in his hand. This afternoon, at half-past five, his Royal Highness received me in his private room.

My remark that, after a two months' exile in European Africa, I had witnessed, not without surprise, the excitement which had taken possession of Germany from one end to the other, turned the conversation upon the burning question of the day. After a few words of warm acknowledgment of the patriotic spirit which animated the German Governments and people, the Prince expounded to me the situation as follows:

'The game stands simply thus. Every time I have seen the Emperor Napoleon, he has endeavoured to persuade me that there was only one means of preventing the complications he foresaw, namely that England and France should come to a previous understanding as to the reconstruction of the map of Europe. A last attempt of this kind was made at Cherbourg. To this I invariably replied: We in England maintain that there are no better means of bringing about the complications feared, than to tie one's hands against eventualities of the future, since by so doing the party who has an interest in change can morally compel the other to co-operate. To play such a part no British statesman would either now or at any future time consent, and least of all would I. The Emperor regretted what he called these mistaken English theories. I cut short the discussion by remarking that he would find himself convinced to his cost

of the correctness of our principle. I know that during the Conferences at Paris, and indeed at Compiègne also, a similar attempt was made with others, but each time in vain. The Emperor has found at length his man at Plombières. Is Cavour the tool of Napoleon, or Napoleon the dupe of the Piedmontese Minister? I know not. Secrets hid in the bosom of a third party are past finding out. In our own interest, as in the interest of peace, we cling firmly at present to the most favourable conjecture. We assume that the French Emperor does not desire war at any price, but has only given assurances to the Sardinians for certain eventualities. In all probability he has promised to support Piedmont in the event of an attack. I conclude this from what Cavour himself says, who continues to talk idly about a pretended attack by Austria. The Emperor has written to us saying that he desires the maintenance of peace, but must beg that people in England and Germany will leave off taking precautions against the impending danger of a war. These might easily oblige him to draw the sword, in order to retain his own position in France.'

I knew already from other quarters that the Emperor's private letter, to which the Prince evidently referred, had excited genuine indignation, and increased still more the suspicion already prevailing.

'What, then, under these circumstances is the proper course for our policy to take? Plainly, nothing else but to deprive the aggressive party of all excuse for striking a blow, so as to put that party entirely in the wrong. That is the position which we have hitherto taken up, and which we recommend Germany also to adopt. We desire, therefore, that the German Governments should maintain for the present a calm reserve, moderate their patriotic zeal, and abstain

from encouraging Austria in her perhaps too unbending attitude. Austria must be able to count implicitly on the public opinion of Europe, and especially of England. If only people in Vienna would understand that this is our honest desire! In England the so-called oppressed Italian nationality has still the sympathies of a powerful party on its side. It is important to disarm this party, and, above all, to strengthen Austria's moral position. Not unless Austria can rely absolutely upon Germany, and in the second instance upon ourselves, will she be able to undertake, with the full prospect of victory, the chastisement of the intended *crime*. I would from my heart that this could be understood in Vienna; and, thank God! the news we have received from Lord Cowley is hitherto assuring.

'As regards Germany, Count Buol has again made a blunder. The circular despatch of February 5 was a mistake, for which he has already paid the penalty. It has wantonly offended Prussia. This pride, so thoroughly Hapsburgian, and so suspiciously increased by the victories in Hungary and Italy, is now out of place; and Austria is wrong in thinking that Germany is bound to defend the non-German possessions of the Austrian Emperor. By withholding from the Berlin Cabinet the circular despatch, addressed to all the German Courts, an unnecessary affront has been offered to Prussia, whose army might still prove useful. It was evidently hoped that she would be compelled by the other members of the Bund, as well as by public opinion, to give active support to Austria in maintaining her possessions in Italy.'

This mistaken supposition of the Prince it was easy to refute.

'The real motive of the Vienna Cabinet,' I remarked, 'in not addressing the Circular of February 5 also to Berlin, was

a feeling of regard for Prussia's position as a Great Power. In point of fact, the Berlin Cabinet was informed, by direct negotiations between the two Courts, earlier and more fully than the rest of us. It is to be hoped that the Prince Regent's sense of chivalry will be superior to such petty jealousies, which only make us laughed at by other countries and encourage the war party in France. This sensitiveness of the Prussian Government is really nothing but a blind. Some Prussian papers actually demand that assistance should only be given to Austria in return for bare cash. The question now, however, is not one of Austria, but of Germany. The Rhine must be defended on the Mincio. If the meditated attack on the left wing of the German position, in Italy, is successful, we must expect to see it repeated against the right wing. And if France is victorious on the Rhine, England's turn will come. It is, therefore, clearly in the interest of Germany and England to check in the bud what your Highness has stigmatised so pointedly as a *crime*.'

To all this the Prince at once assented.

'It follows, then,' I continued, 'that the position of Prussia and the rest of Germany must not be identified with that of England; on the contrary, care must be taken that Prussia, or rather the German Confederation, shall always be a step ahead of England.'

This also the Prince did not dispute, but he advised the greatest caution. For political and, above all, military reasons, he said, ten to one could be adduced to show the importance of preventing the French Emperor from first attacking the Rhine. It was obvious, therefore, that Germany, before taking action, should await the consummation of the intended international crime. The man who, apart from this, chiefly excited the hatred of Napoleon,

was the Prince Regent. That was a fact we must not forget.

'Only let the French armies,' said the Prince, 'exhaust themselves by what we hope will be their impotent assaults upon the Austrian defensive position in Italy. Reflect that the French Emperor, if he is foolish enough to invade Italy, will not come, like the First Consul, into an enemy's country, but must appear as the ally of Piedmont. He has no longer at his disposal those treasures which the First Napoleon looted, and with which he was able to maintain his troops. The French army in Lombardy must now be paid for out of the pockets of the French *rentiers*. People in Paris seem to forget this fact, and yet it will weigh heavily in the balance, for it is bound to make the war more unpopular than ever.'

I could not, of course, follow the Prince in his remarks on the subject of strategy. I simply observed that it was Prussia's interest to stand up with all her might for the honour of Germany. The loftier and more unselfish view the Prince Regent took of the task before him, the more certain could he be of his reward.

After this digression, which I do not regret, since my words seemed to make an impression, I turned the conversation again to Italy. I asked whether and how far the treaties existing between Austria and the lesser Italian States were to be included in the scope of the concessions recommended to the Austrian Cabinet, with the view of placing Austria in the most advantageous diplomatic position, and her opponents *au pied du mur*?

'Must not Austria,' I urged, 'regard it as a matter of honour not to desert those in the hour of danger whom she has promised to aid and protect? Can she possibly countenance the absurd theories of the sophist Cavour? Has not

every sovereign the right to conclude treaties with other sovereigns? Is it not the fable of the wolf and the lamb over again, when defensive treaties between nations are found to serve as a mere screen for aggression and usurpation?'

'You are perfectly right,' replied the Prince. 'But cannot or will not Piedmont plead in answer to this: I am bound in honour to keep the promises I have made to the party of independence?'

'But surely,' I broke in, 'the party of independence is after all no legally constituted power?'

'Certainly not; but we can do nothing in this matter with our German ideas of legal right. There are people who only acknowledge the right of the stronger, and insist that the party of independence is the stronger in Parma, Tuscany, and Modena. Austria's only object, they say, in concluding treaties, to the suppression of liberty, with these Governments, was to extend her power beyond the frontiers assigned to her in 1815. "The cry of enslaved Italy," so people are exclaiming in Turin, "rings in our ears, and Piedmont must hasten to the aid of the oppressed." Unfortunately, there are very many people in this country who attach more importance to such phrases than they deserve. Is a Government which can only be maintained by the help of foreign bayonets, a lawful one? Some will say Yes to this question, and others No. The Italian people think differently on that subject to the Germans. I don't feel myself called on to decide between them. I merely assert that the question of right is doubtful, as in fact it has been doubted.'

'Let us dismiss, then, the question of right,' I replied, 'and look simply at the question of expediency. Can Austria be expected to weaken her defensive position voluntarily and without constraint? Suppose, for instance, that England

found herself on the eve of a war with France and America: what would English Ministers think of a mediating Power who required them to cancel treaties with Portugal, because the Americans would only abstain from war if the strong position of Lisbon were surrendered to them?'

'I readily admit that the question is as difficult as it is delicate. Everything depends on skilful diplomatic handling. That has, certainly, not been of late the strongest side of the Vienna Cabinet. They have often enough ruined their best chances by want of skill. What would you say if, for example, the grievance now alleged against Austria by France and Sardinia, that she has extended, contrary to treaty, her influence to Parma, Tuscany, and Modena, were treated diplomatically in a similar manner to the question of the Roman occupation?'

I was forced to admit that Cardinal Antonelli's move must have been a very clever one, having caused the utmost irritation in Paris and the greatest delight in Vienna.

'Whether it was a "clever move,"' said the Prince with a smile, 'I must leave an open question. It was we who inspired it. We considered the outbreak of a revolution in Rome, which France is still labouring to provoke, to be the lesser evil. The withdrawal of the Austrian troops from the Legations will make the desired impression here, and also enable the Austrian army to concentrate better in Lombardy. What if the Austrian Emperor should now declare that he was prepared, under certain conditions, to renounce the rights secured to him by the separate treaties with Tuscany, Parma, and Modena? What if he were to demand, as a *sine quâ non* condition, extensive guarantees for the maintenance of peace and order, and were to stipulate besides that the princes of

those three Duchies should take the initiative in cancelling the treaties of protection?'

At the close of our conversation we discussed the position of Russia in the expected war. I mentioned the disclosures received some eight or ten days ago in Paris, and added that they had visibly cooled down the illusions encouraged by the Grand Duke Constantine's imprudent utterances in Paris and Turin. Thus much was clear, that Russia could not think of engaging in any offensive war for the next five years. The French Emperor's ill-humour had been manifestly increased by his having been undeceived in his hopes of Russian co-operation. Moreover, the efforts of the Russian Empress and the so-called German Party in St. Petersburg did not appear to have been altogether fruitless.

The Prince listened to these remarks with evident satisfaction. He shared my conviction that Germany, if united, had nothing to fear from Gortschakoff's 'neutralité inquiétante.' It would be a more serious matter—and this he said with emphasis—if France were to meditate an attack on Venetia, together with a repetition of Marshal Marmont's expedition. In that case, Russia might show her hand in a manner very dangerous to Austria, by possibly enlisting in her favour the Panslavistic sympathies of the frontier populations.

'I throw this out,' concluded Prince Albert, 'merely as a conjecture. Were I the French Emperor and had to conduct a war against Austria, I would begin there and not in Italy. Who knows what has taken the Grand Duke Constantine to Athens? Does he mean to set the East in flames? If so, we are now on the eve of incalculable complications, and Austria will require all her energies.'

The Prince took leave of me most graciously, and advised

me to keep this conversation strictly secret and not to write by post. France was now using every effort to obtain copies of all despatches, however small their interest. King Leopold had been obliged about a week ago to change all the post-office officials in Ostend, where French bribes had caused the utmost mischief. It would be as well, therefore, to keep a watchful eye in Vienna on the officials of the French railway company, and not spare the expense of special messengers.

London: March 20, 1859.

I did not fail to announce to you by telegraph the peaceful turn things have taken the day before yesterday in Paris, and yesterday in Vienna. I happened fortunately to witness the first impression made on the leading English Ministers by Austria's conditional acceptance of the French proposal of a Congress.

On the 18th, Lord Malmesbury told the Austrian Ambassador that Lord Cowley, as he had informed him by telegraph, had found Napoleon most favourably disposed. The British Ambassador had frankly confessed that he did not bring with him any definite and formulated proposals of mediation; but that, nevertheless, a very conciliatory disposition was then prevailing in Vienna, which — on the supposition of its being responded to by France—afforded hopes of a peaceful settlement of the Italian question. The Emperor had answered that he regretted that no distinct proposals of mediation were forthcoming, but that he found elements in what Lord Cowley had confidentially communicated, which might possibly lead to a diplomatic understanding. Great faults had been committed on both sides; but Sardinia was responsible for the greatest. There was still time, however, to seek an escape from a situation which it was his

sincere desire to terminate. If the Emperor of Austria would consent to the summoning of a Congress of the Five Powers in some neutral city, France would do her best to make that proposal acceptable. France could not oppose the outspoken will of Europe, and he, Napoleon, would be then no longer accused of having broken his word with the Italians. Such is the substance of Lord Cowley's first report.

Lord Malmesbury immediately instructed Lord Augustus Loftus urgently to recommend to the Austrian Government the acceptance of the French proposal, in which Russia had concurred. Count Apponyi was requested orally at the same time to give his warmest support to this recommendation, and was positively assured that the Congress would of course consider the territorial position of Austria, as well as the boundaries of the Italian States, fixed by the Treaties of 1815, as a fundamental matter unalterable, and altogether outside the scope of discussion. The exclusive points for deliberation would be the evacuation of the Papal States, the administrative reforms to be recommended to the Court of Rome, and the special treaties between Austria and some of the Italian Governments. Apponyi having ascertained these points, resolved to telegraph for instructions to his Court.

The decided manner in which the Austrian Cabinet repudiated any interference in Austria's treaty relations, had made the deepest impression on Lord Cowley, and indirectly on the British Ministers. The latter, moreover, made no secret of confessing that Austria would be fully justified in refusing to recognise the competence of the European Areopagus with reference to the Italian question. They were, therefore, all the more prepared for a refusal when they learned for the first time, from Lord Cowley's despatches, the full extent of Austria's preparations for war. All the greater was

their delight, not to say their thankfulness, on receiving the telegram, which happened to arrive last night during a grand dinner, to which Count Apponyi had invited Lord Derby, Lord Malmesbury, Disraeli, and other prominent members of the Cabinet, and where I was present also.

This telegram was delivered to the Austrian First Secretary of Legation just as the ladies had left the dining-room. Shortly afterwards its contents were communicated to the English Ministers. Austria's conditional acceptance of the French proposal of a Congress was interpreted as a new proof of her desire to resume to its full extent the old alliance with England. The cordial acknowledgments expressed to Count Apponyi by Lord Derby, Lord Malmesbury, and Disraeli, will be hailed with satisfaction in Vienna. The Austrian Cabinet will not repent the sacrifice it has made to moderation and a spirit of compliance. It is plain that the distrust in Napoleon's love of peace was only too well justified. Was not the last French move intended, perhaps, simply as a means of giving France time to prepare for war? Be that, however, as it may, the importance to Austria of having enlisted public opinion in Germany and England on her side, cannot possibly be over-estimated. The military and financial disadvantages caused by the postponement of a war which has been always regarded by pessimists as inevitable, are not worth consideration when compared with the political advantages thus obtained. For if the deliberations of the Congress result in war, the diplomatic position she has acquired will materially lighten the strategic task of her generals. If, again, the Congress leads to the neutralisation and disarming of Sardinia, to the healing of the wounds in the Austrian body politic, which have been kept open so industriously by those who envy and hate her, and to a renewed guarantee, based on

international law, of her possessions, as established by treaty, these results would exhibit peaceful conquests of undeniable value. But it will be time to halloo when out of the wood. The danger is not yet over, though its full extent may now at length have dawned on the man who raised the storm. Is there anywhere a spell to bind the unchained hordes of the Italian party of revolution on the Ticino? And if such a thing can be done, is there an honest determination to do it? These are questions which the future alone can solve.

Lord Derby summed up to me the situation in this sanguine remark: 'I think that the prospects of peace have never been so bright as to-day.'

One word in conclusion, which explains the English policy of mediation.

'Our coast defences and our naval preparations,' said Disraeli to me in the strictest confidence, 'are not yet completed. We require a full twelvemonth for that purpose. If we can manage to put off war till then, we shall have nothing any longer to fear from the French.'

London: March 24, 1859.

I have only succeeded this evening in clearing up the mistake contained in my telegrams and letter of the 20th. The mischievous habit in this country of employing the telegraph for intricate and delicate negotiations, has evils which justify only too well the distrust entertained by the old school against this rapid and multiplied interchange of ideas. It is almost incredible, but none the less true, that the English Government have remained for two whole days under the impression that the proposal of the Congress came from France. It was the Note in the 'Moniteur' of the 22nd that first explained the misunderstanding, for

which the French Ambassador in this country is made responsible.

When Lord Malmesbury telegraphed to Lord Augustus Loftus on the 18th, and made the verbal statement to Count Apponyi which I have previously reported, he did so under the conviction that the proposal for the Congress had originated with the French. Then followed on the 19th the conditional acceptance by Austria, before the official invitation to the Congress from Russia, not from France, could possibly have reached Vienna. The *quiproquo* could only have facilitated Austria's decision, while here it has enhanced the gratitude for this proof of her peaceful disposition and friendly feeling towards England. Count Buol yesterday informed the Russian representative in Vienna of his Government's official acceptance of the proposal, and the Five Great Powers are now ready to take part in the Congress. Count Buol's desire to see the Italian Governments, with whom Austria concluded the much talked-of separate treaties, invited to send representatives, will now make it impossible to exclude Sardinia, as was originally intended. Count Cavour is expected to-night at Paris, where he has ordered the Sardinian Minister here, the Marquis d'Azeglio, to meet him.

The choice of Aix-la-Chapelle, which is desired here, for the meeting of the Congress, has been objected to by France, on the ground that Aix-la-Chapelle is not a neutral place. Count Bernstorff suggests to me, not without reason, that after this objection to a Prussian city, the perfidious eulogies lavished on the Prussian Government in the Note in the 'Moniteur' of the 15th could never have been meant in earnest.

London: March 27, 1859.

It has rarely been more difficult than just at present, to follow the dissolving views of State policy. The telegraphic despatches, which cross one another hourly, often change the situation so suddenly, that to-day's fact becomes to-morrow's fiction.

The strange misunderstanding of which I informed you in my letter of the 24th, has left behind it here, as well as in Vienna, a certain feeling of irritation not altogether favourable to peace. Lord Malmesbury is evidently puzzled how to answer the question in Parliament which Lord Clarendon postponed last Friday, out of pure courtesy, till to-morrow evening. Granted that Lord Cowley has paved the way for this European Congress. Granted also that the action of the British Cabinet has done much to enable Austria to join that Congress. Still, in the eyes of the world, the glory of having discovered this peaceful solution is due to Russia. It will cost the English Ministers some pains, therefore, to explain to the Opposition why they allowed the initiative to be taken by a Power less interested than England in the peaceful settlement of the Italian question. Moreover, the material acquired by the confidential negotiations with Austria has become to some extent useless. The Austrian Cabinet adheres simply to the Russian proposal, as stated correctly in the Note in the 'Moniteur' of the 22nd. Austria announces her readiness to join the Congress of the Five Powers, awaits the communication of the points of discussion put forward prospectively by Russia, protests against the admittance of Sardinia, and demands, above all, that the latter should disarm. This disarmament is now regarded in Vienna as a certainty since the assurances obtained from Napoleon. The Austrian proposal to admit Tuscany, Parma, and Modena

with a consultative voice, was naturally waived directly it was understood in Vienna that Sardinia also, in that case, would have to be admitted. Cavour and his French friends are using every effort nevertheless to prevent Sardinia's exclusion.

As to Russia, it is not to be expected that she should employ her newly acquired influence in Europe on behalf of Austria. The present British Ministry is, however, on the eve of breaking up, and the new one will not be disposed to stand up for Austria's rights. All these are gloomy signs, which must strengthen the conviction that the ray of sunshine that seemed to light up the European horizon has only served to reveal more clearly the danger of the threatening storm.

London: March 30, 1859.

Lord Malmesbury found himself compelled, at yesterday's sitting of the House of Lords, to correct his answer as reported in the 'Times,' by stating that he had received the first communication respecting the proposal of a Congress from the French Ambassador, and not from Baron Brunnow. About the misunderstanding which I mentioned to you in my last letter, the Foreign Secretary naturally said nothing, being unwilling to expose the peace-loving Duke of Malakoff. The latter had occasioned the misunderstanding by having forgotten to bring with him Walewski's despatch, the text of which first explained to Lord Malmesbury two days afterwards that the proposal came not from France but from Russia.

On the 22nd or 23rd Baron Brunnow first delivered Russia's formal invitation to a Congress. In reply to Malmesbury's remark, 'Vous venez trop tard, nous savons déjà ce que vous nous apportez,' he stated that he brought with him not merely the invitation, but also the agreement of his Court to the four conditions proposed by England.

Prussia, too, had already assented to those conditions, and France also under certain reservations. Austria's reply is still delayed, as she is awaiting the communication in writing of the points for discussion.

London: April 6, 1859.

The prospect of a Congress is becoming daily more remote, and the negotiations on the subject are ceasing to attract attention. The Ministerial crisis which has suddenly occurred, and the inevitable dissolution of Parliament, are paralysing the action of the Government.

The *contrecoup* has not been wanting in Paris and Turin. The spoiled darling—not of the Graces, but of the Franco-Russian *entente*, as, earlier, of the Anglo-French alliance—is holding language since his return from Paris which can only be explained by the policy of despair if it has not been inspired by the French Emperor himself. Count Cavour flatly refuses to comply with the *sine quâ non* condition demanded by Austria, by disarming the Sardinian army, now strengthened by Garibaldi's volunteers. He will not listen to Sardinia's having only a consultative voice like Naples and Tuscany at the Congress.

The French proposal to fix a line of demarcation instead of resorting to disarmament does not seem to be meant seriously. Such a measure would be an insult rather than a satisfaction to Austria. It is impossible to put a well-disciplined regular army on the same level as volunteers. Moreover, a very different value must be attached to the Austrian Emperor's promise of non-aggression, to that due to the assurance which Cavour has consented to give in his insolent despatch of the 17th. Nevertheless, every effort is being made here to persuade Austria to withdraw her troops ten miles inland from the Ticino, with the praiseworthy view of leaving

to her adversaries the odium of being the aggressors. Of course, it rests with the Emperor Francis Joseph alone to determine the limits of his concession. But if Austria, forced from one position to another, has to make incessant sacrifices to peace, either the Congress will be unnecessary or the *casus belli*, which is described as 'introuvable,' will suddenly become a stern reality.

London: April 8, 1859.

The question of which Lord Palmerston gave notice for this evening [1] is postponed. Disraeli stated yesterday that a debate on the question of peace or war would be inconvenient, and more than inconvenient, to the public interest, but promised at the same time to give the House an opportunity of having one before the dissolution, and to fix the day for it early next week. Lord Malmesbury made a similar statement in the House of Lords.

The language of the Ministers has given the impression that the moment for decision has arrived. In the City there was a rumour that Sardinia had declared war against Austria. From Vienna also the latest news is very warlike. People there seem to be prepared for the worst. Great importance is attached here to the statement that Austria, notwithstanding the massing of her troops in Italy, could place three army corps at the disposal of the German Diet.

London: April 11, 1859.

If the statements made by the Ministers in both Houses on the 8th were already regarded as foreshadowing a diplomatic rupture, the movements of troops, which were announced

[1] Viz.: To ask her Majesty's Government what is the present position in which this country stands, either as mediator or negotiator, in regard to the discussions now going on either at Paris or elsewhere, in regard to the affairs of Italy and Europe in general.

simultaneously by the telegraph, might well have given new food to the alarming rumours which have been current in London for the last two days.

Meanwhile Lord Malmesbury persists in his optimism. Only yesterday he expressed to Baron Brunnow his hope that peace would not be disturbed. Whether, and to what extent, the verbal reports of Sir James Hudson and Lord Cowley will confirm this pleasing but astounding optimism, remains to be proved.

Baron Brunnow, whom I have just seen, does not abandon the hope of a peaceful settlement. He reminds me, however, of the analogy between the present situation and that which preceded the last war with Russia. Now, as then, the fatal contrast between peaceful assurances and warlike tendencies is unmistakable. He thinks Lord Cowley takes too gloomy a view of matters. The fact that Napoleon had requested time for reflection, and declined to accept at once the Austrian proposal of a general disarmament, was rather a good sign than otherwise. If his acceptance now followed, there was a certain significance in the act. Of course the promise given on both sides to discontinue their armaments would practically have only a secondary value. Everything depended on the sincerity with which that promise was fulfilled. In Paris it was suspected that Austria was only waiting for an opportunity to enforce herself the disarming of Sardinia. In Vienna, on the other hand, it was feared that France was only seeking to gain time to complete her preparations for war. That Austria should be loth to give her enemy this desired delay, was intelligible enough. Nevertheless, she might remember that in the last war the first cannon shot tore to pieces the separate treaty between Russia and Turkey. Napoleon had promised the disarmament of Sardinia. But

if Sardinia refused to disarm, how could France compel her ally to do so? Austria ought not, in her own interests, to subordinate high policy to minor issues. The advantages resulting from the fact that France and Russia had accepted as an alterable basis the conditions proposed by England, including the territorial arrangement of 1815, were surely not to be despised. The political importance of the accession of France in particular was not sufficiently appreciated by Austria. The volunteers—no matter whether 30,000 strong—were harmless so long as they were paid for by Sardinia. Their disbanding, however, would create a real danger. There was no denying the fact that Italy was in a very unhealthy condition, and that affairs in Naples and the Papal States urgently required a remedy, as in fact the south of the peninsula inspired altogether greater anxiety than the north.

With regard to the Note in yesterday's 'Moniteur,' my Russian colleague pointedly applied the saying, *Qui s'excuse s'accuse*. He had taken good care, he said, since his return not to be too profuse in his protestations of peace. Whoever honestly desired peace, would best show it by his deeds.

London: April 16, 1859.

I propose briefly to recapitulate the stages through which the negotiations have passed since the end of last week.

On the 9th all hopes of peace were already abandoned. It was said that a French corps of 60,000 men was to cross the frontiers of Savoy to support the Sardinian defensive position.

Lord Cowley, notwithstanding a very violent scene with Napoleon, failed at first to obtain his assent to a general disarmament. The Emperor desired forty-eight hours to consider the proposal, and at the end of that time declared his readiness to agree to it in principle. This peaceful turn

was known here on the 11th. Meanwhile, however, the Austrian Cabinet had formulated its last word, either a 'general disarmament in principle,' the execution of which was to be the first duty of the Congress, and immediately afterwards the disarming of Sardinia, or a general disarmament effective and immediate, and then the postponement of the Congress till the three armies were completely disarmed.

On the 12th or 13th it was rumoured that Walewski, after a violent scene with Lord Cowley, gave an interpretation to the 'désarmement général en principe,' which was bound to render that agreement wholly nugatory. Nevertheless, hopes were not abandoned of a compromise, and it was expected that the 'Moniteur' would announce not only that the Congress would meet, but that the plenipotentiaries would proceed at once to give effect to the general disarmament.

Only a few days later the conviction gained ground here that Austria neither could nor would accept this solution. Let the French Cabinet twist and turn as it will, all its shuffles are futile in the face of this dilemma: either you wish for peace, then disarm; or you wish for war, then Austria is quite justified in not allowing you time to complete your preparations under the cover of a Congress. In reply to Austria's peremptory question, whether France will agree to the effective general disarmament of the three armies, Yea or Nay, Paris has again come forward with counter-proposals.

The efforts of the mediating Powers are concentrated on Turin. Prussia and England are seeking to impress on Cavour the responsibility he would have to bear if the Congress were frustrated by his fault. The mission of the Chevalier Massimo d'Azeglio to Paris is regarded here as a symptom of giving way. The Marquis d'Azeglio, his nephew, has hurried off to Paris this evening, with the intention of

returning next Monday. Shortly before his leaving, I called his attention to the speech in which Lord John Russell assured his constituents that England's interests required the maintenance of the treaties of 1815, that Austria was within her rights, and that France and Sardinia were responsible for the threatened war. Possibly the French might be induced at the eleventh hour to reflect, on learning that the warmest champion of the cause of Italy, with all his Liberal idiosyncrasies, has not shut his eyes to facts, and, for his own part, denounces the idea of wresting from Austria a single foot of Lombard soil.

Lisbon: May 6, 1859.

In pursuance of the orders which your Excellency had conveyed to me at Paris, I embarked with M. de Könneritz and Count Hohenthal at Southampton on the 27th ult. on board the English steamship 'Tagus.' Being delayed by contrary winds, we took six days instead of four to get here, and it was not until the 3rd, about noon, that we dropped anchor. I had begged Count Lavradio to advise the Duke of Terceira by telegraph of my intended departure, and of my desire to land without the least ceremony. By this means I avoided the inconvenience of a solemn reception, and I have every reason to believe that they are pleased with me here for having done so.

The President of the Council, however, had courteously sent M. de Castro on board to meet me, and the Minister of Finance, M. Casal Ribeiro, was kind enough also to come and welcome me. M. de Castro informed me on the Duke's behalf that the royal carriages had been placed at my disposal to take me to the hotel where I had engaged apartments. As this hotel looks over the Tagus, I preferred to go there straight in the Admiralty barge which had been sent to take

me. The Consul-General of the King, M. Vanzeller, who had come on board the steamer to receive me, and M. de Castro accompanied us ashore.

Scarcely had I landed, when the Duke of Terceira did me the honour of coming to see me. I profited by his visit to deliver the copy of my credentials to his Excellency, who promised to take immediately the orders of his royal master for the audience which I had been careful to request. On my returning the visit a few hours later, the Duke was already able to give me the note, a copy of which I have the honour to send to your Excellency, appointing the formal audience for Thursday, the 5th, at one o'clock in the afternoon. His Excellency kindly communicated to me at the same time the instructions given to Count de Murça, whose duty it would be, as the youngest peer of the realm, to introduce the ambassador.

I was fortunate enough, a few moments after my arrival, to meet his Majesty King Ferdinand, who was taking a walk with his Royal Highness the Prince Augustus, his brother. The King was pleased to speak to me, and received me most graciously. I had the honour of presenting myself to him the next day, and expressing your Excellency's deep regret at having been prevented by circumstances from discharging in person the high mission which the King, our august master, had been pleased to entrust to me. King Ferdinand, in sharing this regret, had the kindness to inform me that, as your Excellency had not been able to come, their Portuguese Majesties saw with pleasure that the choice had fallen on me.

The formal audience took place yesterday. About half-past eleven the Count de Murça was at the door of my hotel with the King's carriages and a detachment of cavalry of the Guard, which was intended to serve as an escort. The *cortège*

started shortly before noon. M. de Könneritz and Count Hohenthal took their seats in the first carriage, drawn by eight mules, richly caparisoned. The State carriage, lined with scarlet velvet, followed empty. I stepped with Count de Murça into the third carriage, drawn by eight horses. The King's livery servants and two outriders on horseback accompanied the procession, and a squadron of Uhlans of the Guard brought up the rear. We had to traverse the greater part of the city. All the sentries that we passed presented arms. In front of the Palace had been drawn up a battalion of infantry on parade, with the band at their head; and the military honours reserved for royalty were given to the representative of his Majesty our King.

The master of the ceremonies and the Captain of the Guards received me at the foot of the staircase. The halberdiers formed line and presented arms. We found in the first apartment the President of the Council, the Queen's Grand Master, the Marquis de Fronteira, and the aides-de-camp of the King. The Infantes Dom Juan and Dom Augusto, the Ministers, the high dignitaries of the Crown, the ladies of the Court, and the peers of the realm were assembled in the throne room, where their Majesties the King Dom Pedro, the Queen and King Ferdinand, as well as the Infanta Maria Anna, had taken their seats under the daïs, when I was introduced by the Grand Master of the Ceremonies, the Captain of the Guards, and Count de Murça. The ambassador, according to custom, enters covered, and does not remove his hat till the first obeisance. Their Majesties uncover at the same time. This ceremony is repeated three times between the three customary salutations. After having read the annexed address, I handed my credentials to his Majesty, who was pleased to read the answer handed to him by the Duke of Terceira. I

have reason to believe that this answer was composed by the King himself, and I should be afraid to weaken the effect of the royal words by making any comment upon them, penetrated as I am with the most profound gratitude for the gracious satisfaction which his Majesty was pleased to express for the feeble services I had been able to render on that occasion. I then addressed the speech given below to her Royal Highness the Infanta, who was pleased to reply in a most touching manner in a voice that betrayed her deep emotion.

Your Excellency will find inclosed the text of the royal answers. The whole ceremony was stamped with the highest dignity. The Court of Portugal has neglected nothing to show the value it attaches to this alliance, so happily cemented.

Discours de l'Ambassadeur à sa Majesté Très-Fidèle.[1]

SIRE,—Sa Majesté le Roi de Saxe, M.A.M., a daigné m'accréditer en qualité d'Ambassadeur Extraordinaire auprès de Votre Majesté Très-Fidèle. J'ai l'honneur de Lui présenter mes lettres de créance.

Humble représentant d'un Souverain respectueusement vénéré, je viens, en Son nom, demander à Votre Majesté d'accorder à S.A.R. Monseigneur le Prince George, Duc de Saxe, fils puîné du Roi, mon Auguste Maître, la main de S.A.R. Madame la Sérénissime Infante Mariâ Anna de Portugal et des Algarves, Duchesse de Saxe-Cobourg-Gotha, sœur aînée de Votre Majesté.

L'assentiment que, du consentement paternel de S.M. le Roi Ferdinand, Votre Majesté a déjà donné d'une manière si gracieuse aux fiançailles de l'Auguste Couple et aux articles du traité de mariage me donne à espérer qu'Elle daignera agréer ma demande avec la même bienveillance.

Mon Auguste Souverain n'a pas cru pouvoir mieux assurer l'avenir d'un fils bien-aimé qu'en ratifiant avec empressement le choix de Son cœur. Les rares et éminentes qualités de la Sérénis-

[1] The speeches that follow are taken from the official Portuguese journal, *Diario do Governo*, No. 106, of May 7, 1859.

sime Infante sont autant de garanties de félicité que les Augustes Fiancés puiseront dans une alliance appelée à resserrer encore, si cela est possible, les liens d'amitié et de parenté qui unissent si heureusement les deux Augustes Maisons Royales.

Puisse le Tout-Puissant exaucer les vœux des deux peuples alliés et amis, si loyalement attachés de tout temps à Leurs Augustes Souverains; puisse-t-Il combler de Ses grâces divines, et bénir de toutes Ses bénédictions, l'union du petit-fils d'Albert le Valeureux et de la petite-fille d'Ernest le Pie, Représentants si dignes des illustres vertus de Leurs Ancêtres.

Réponse du Roi.

Monsieur l'Ambassadeur,—C'est avec une pleine confiance dans l'avenir que Je ratifie solennellement l'assentiment que J'ai donné aux fiançailles ainsi qu'aux articles du traité de mariage entre l'Infante, Ma Sœur bien-aimée, et le Prince George, Duc de Saxe, fils puîné du Roi, votre Auguste Maître.

Cette union a des fondements trop solides, vous le savez, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, pour que l'acte, qui s'accomplit en ce moment, puisse ajouter quelque chose à ce qu'une commune sympathie a commencé. C'est là, c'est surtout dans les qualités qui distinguent si éminemment le Prince, que J'aime à regarder comme un Frère chéri, et dans le sentiment profond du devoir, que l'éducation de Ma Sœur n'a cessé d'être dirigée à graver dans son cœur, qu'existent les garanties les plus désirables d'un bonheur que les bénédictions de l'Eglise ne sont pas toujours puissantes à créer d'une manière inébranlable.

Dans une famille chacun a son rôle, chacun y porte sa part d'affection, chacun y trouve sa responsabilité : Moi, Frére, J'en ai donc aussi. Je peux heureusement borner Ma part d'action à recommander Ma Sœur à l'affection de son futur Epoux, et aux soins de ses futurs Parents, auxquels, Je l'espère, son amitié dévouée et filiale ne fera jamais défaut.

Quant à vous, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, en recevant les lettres de votre Souverain, qui vous accréditent près de Ma Personne, Je tiens à vous dire combien M'a été agréable le choix dont vous avez été l'objet. Vos qualités, que J'ai eu loisir d'apprécier personnelle-

ment, vous assurent et de Ma bienveillance et de l'accomplissement parfait d'une mission destinée à contribuer d'une manière toute particulière à resserrer, si c'est possible, les liens qui subsistent entre deux couronnes et deux familles qui s'honorent d'une origine commune.

Discours de l'Ambassadeur à S.A.R. l'Infante.

SÉRÉNISSIME INFANTE,—En choisissant Votre Altesse Royale pour compagne de Sa vie, Son Altesse Royale le Prince George a comblé tous les vœux de Ses Augustes Parents et de la Saxe.

Leurs Majestés le Roi et la Reine, mes Augustes Maîtres, attendent avec impatience le moment d'accueillir V.A.R. comme leur Fille bien-aimée. Elle retrouvera dans le sein de l'Auguste Famille Royale toutes les affections tendres et profondes qui ont embelli Son existence dans l'Illustre Maison Paternelle.

Son Auguste Epoux, digne par Ses sentiments et par Ses vertus de la tendresse que V.A.R. Lui a vouée, trouvera le bonheur de Sa vie à faire partager à V.A.R. la félicité que les qualités éminentes et les grâces aimables de Son Auguste Fiancée Lui assurent.

Dévoué depuis mon enfance à la famille de mes Souverains, je me félicite de l'heureux avenir que cette alliance prépare à l'Auguste Maison de Saxe et à mon pays ; et c'est avec une émotion difficile à maîtriser que je me fais l'organe des hommages respectueux qui attendent V.A.R. dans Sa nouvelle patrie.

Réponse de l'Infante.

Je ratifie de tout Mon cœur, avec l'autorisation du Roi Mon Auguste Frère et Souverain et du Roi Mon Père bien-aimé, le consentement que J'ai prêté à la demande du Prince George, Mon futur Epoux.

Je vous prie, Monsieur l'Ambassadeur, d'assurer le Roi et la Reine, vos Augustes Maîtres, que Je tâcherai de répondre à l'affection dont ils m'assurent d'avance par l'accomplissement de Mes devoirs envers celui auquel Je confie le bonheur de Ma vie.

CHAPTER XVI.

PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE.—1859 (*continued*).

London, May 26: Anxieties and Confessions of the French Ambassador.—London, May 30: Conversation with Lord Palmerston—Lord Wodehouse on Prussia and Austria.—London, June 4: Conversation with Lord Clarendon on Austria's Policy and Conduct of the War.—London, June 13: News from the Scene of War—Conversation with Persigny as to Terms of Peace.—London, June 15: Malmesbury's Blue-book on the Italian War—Formation of the new Ministry—Its anti-Austrian Tendencies—Situation at the Scene of War—Rome.—London, June 20: Prince Paul Esterházy's Mission to London—Kossuth's Revolutionary Plans—Napoleon's Overtures to England—French Leanings of Palmerston and Russell—Strengthening of the Mediterranean Squadron.—London, Buckingham Palace, June 24: Prince Albert's Letter to Count Vitzthum; his Approval of Baron Beust's Reply to a Despatch of Prince Gortschakoff.—London, July 3: Prussian Proposals of Mediation—Suspicions as to their Reception in England—Solferino—*Respice finem!*—French Liberals—Position of the English Ministry.—London, July 11: The Meeting at Villafranca—First Impressions—Napoleon not Master of the Situation—Quarrel with Rome and the Republican Party—General Flahault's Remark on the Armistice.—London, July 12: Dinner at Lord John Russell's—Communication of the French Terms of Peace to the Austrian Ambassador—The Armistice—New French Proposals approved by Palmerston and Russell—Conclusion of the Preliminaries.—London, July 21: Austrian Circular Despatch of the 16th—Unexplained Misunderstanding—Comparison of the French Draft with the actually concluded Preliminaries of Villafranca.—London, July 21: The Ministry and Opposition against a Congress—The Riddle of Villafranca.—London, July 25: Prussian Circular Despatch of the 21st—Lord John Russell's Vindication of Prussia's Policy—The *Quiproquo*—Correct Attitude of the Crown during the Negotiations—Critical Position of Napoleon.—London, July 28: Groundless Rumour of an intended Visit of Napoleon to Osborne—Publication of Lord John Russell's Despatches of June 22 and July 7.—London, July 30: Sitting of the House of Commons of July 28—Lord John Russell's Judgment on Villafranca—Disraeli criticises the Government Policy and protests against a Congress—Lord Palmerston's retro

spective Confessions.—Paris, Aug. 10: Debate on Lord Elcho's Motion—Lord John Russell's strange Account of the British Constitution—Prince Paul Esterházy on Napoleon's Difficulties and the Task of the Austrian Cabinet.

London: May 26, 1859.

THE return of Count Persigny to his post as Ambassador, which he had lost last year under such peculiar circumstances, is regarded by some as a proof of the French Emperor's indifference to England. Others see in it a sign of weakness on the part of the present Tory Cabinet, who protested only last January against this appointment. Persigny has employed the first week of his presence here in opening the flood-gates of his eloquence in a manner that astonishes even those who are accustomed to the strange behaviour of this extraordinary diplomatist.

The French Ambassador honoured me yesterday with a visit, and for a whole hour made me political confessions, the *naïveté* of which would have justified his taciturn Emperor in exclaiming, 'Heaven save me from my friends!'

I should tax your patience too severely were I to attempt to describe this tissue of contradictions, laments, and confessions. What came out most clearly from this mass of words was the anxiety, bordering on despair, of Napoleon's only honest friend. No one but a man who gives up his monarch's cause as lost can talk like Persigny. He honestly laments the promise given to Count Cavour at Plombières, and sees in it the origin of the present complication. Nevertheless, he thinks it natural that France, in view of Austria's preponderance in Italy, should have taken under her protection the only State in the peninsula which Austria neither rules over nor governs.

It was something new to me to hear the confession that the French occupation had injured French influence in Rome.

'Comme à Naples l'Autriche règne et gouverne à Rome. Le Sacré Collège obéit au cabinet de Vienne et le Saint-Père est devenu l'instrument de cette puissance. Oubliant que nous l'avons sauvé et protégé, le Pape se plaît à nous contrarier en tout et nous ne pouvons pas même obtenir la nomination d'un simple curé.' These words were repeated twice and sharply emphasised. Brunnow, therefore, may well be right in insisting that the main difficulty lies in Rome, not in Upper Italy.

Remembering that Napoleon III. owes his elevation mainly to the clergy, and that the latter rule the country population in France, the manifest state of tension with the Roman See would seem to account for that policy of despair which has conjured up the present war. As for any desire of conquest, Persigny denies it with almost comical vehemence.

'Je jure,' he exclaimed, 'que mon pauvre Empereur avait reconnu ses torts, qu'il ne demandait pas mieux que de trouver le moyen d'une retraite honorable de notre position trop avancée. Mais est-il donc possible qu'on le croie assez bête pour vouloir commencer à cinquante ans la carrière d'un conquérant? Mais ne voit-on donc pas que toutes les chances de cette malheureuse guerre sont contre nous? L'Empereur d'Autriche s'il essuyait des défaites, resterait toujours Empereur et rentrerait dans sa capitale aux acclamations de ses peuples. Voilà l'avantage des dynasties anciennes et historiques! Notre jeune dynastie se trouvant en face de partis hostiles ne supporte pas de revers. Battu, mon pauvre Empereur serait perdu.' (The more drastic expression he used, I will not repeat.) 'Je le jure, sur mon honneur, l'Empereur voulait la paix, et la preuve c'est que l'ultimatum autrichien nous a surpris d'une manière terrible. Nos préparatifs n'étaient

terminés que sur le papier et si les Autrichiens avaient eu un général audacieux à leur tête, ils nous auraient coupé en deux avant que nous n'eussions pu franchir les Alpes. J'ai tremblé pendant huit ou dix jours, et je ne comprends pas encore pourquoi on nous a épargné.'

There are people who would see in the feverish activity of the French Ambassador a preconcerted game, and the design of lulling England and Germany to sleep.

I do not share this view; Persigny is no disciple of Machiavelli. His talk will not deceive a child. But the man is at times something of a visionary, and therefore his half-involuntarily oracular speeches always deserve some attention. He almost seemed to see Louis Napoleon in the spirit again as a refugee in King Street, which many think would be the most fortunate issue of this Imperial comedy. In that case Persigny could hardly have discussed the causes of such a catastrophe with more candour than he did to-day in speaking of the future.

In conclusion, one more revelation of Persigny's deserves mention. He admitted that his Emperor had undertaken the responsibility, in his interview with Lord Cowley, of effecting the disarming of Sardinia. On my asking why then he had not kept his word, he replied that Victor Emmanuel had threatened to abdicate and come to Paris, in order to take the Emperor personally to account.

London: May 30, 1859.

Shortly after receiving the Speech from the Throne, with which the King of Saxony opened the extraordinary session of the Landtag, I had an opportunity of communicating to Lord Palmerston the contents of that high-spirited address. The future Premier's inquiry as to what then were the treaties and rights to which we attached such extreme importance,

was characteristic. Austria, he said, not France, had broken the treaties of 1815, and Lord Derby himself had described that act as criminal. I replied that since France had thrown aside the mask in Tuscany, England would surely at length perceive that Italy served merely as a pretext for the French policy of aggression.

'Well,' answered Lord Palmerston, 'you may use very high language, but I hope you will wisely keep within your own limits.'

This remark, thrown out in his usual playful tone, coincides with the view here prevalent in the Liberal camp. Thus I had yesterday evening a conversation of some length with Lord Wodehouse, who flatters himself he will be Lord Palmerston's next Foreign Secretary and be invited to join the Cabinet.

For England, observed the Radical minister *in spe*, it was perfectly immaterial whether Austria or France were victorious in Italy. Things could not fare worse with that poor country than they had fared under Austrian rule. We had at any rate history on our side, if we believed that Italy could only exist under Austrian or under French influence. The proof of this was still to be seen.

I remarked that Italy was merely a pretext. If people in England would not see that the question was one of resuming the policy of Tilsit, they could not, at any rate, blame Germany for not sharing British optimism. This led Wodehouse to unburden his heart about the sins of omission committed by Prussia and Germany.

'Had Prussia and Protestant Germany,' he said, 'only done as we desired them, and raised their voice, together with ours, against Russia and the aggrandisement of the Emperor Nicholas, the Crimean War would have been avoided. Germany would then have been entitled to make the same demand

of us now against the aggrandisement of Napoleon. There is no State that inspires us with warmer sympathies, but not one of the Great Powers that inspires us with less confidence, than Prussia. Not a single European question has cropped up during the last twenty years in which the Berlin Cabinet has followed a plain and practical policy. With the most sincere wish to go hand in hand with that Power, we have never succeeded in knowing clearly what Prussia really wants. Now it was the King, now the war party, now the thoroughly senseless fear of Russia, now jealousy of Austria, now the Diet, now the Bamberg Conference—and I know not what —there was always a reason, a pretext, an excuse for inactivity and a waiting policy. The result of Prussia's constant dread of disobliging this party or that, has been that, from fear of making enemies, she has forfeited the friendship of her friends. Even the question of the Danubian Principalities, in which absolutely no Prussian interest was affected, has remained unsettled, thanks to Prussian indecision. We have no sympathies for the Austrian system, but Austria has a policy, and is really a Great Power. We may agree or disagree with her, but we always know where we are. The Austrian Cabinet has always the courage to have a purpose, and to defend it if necessary. Thus, for instance, while blaming Austria's late ultimatum to Turin, we cannot but acknowledge the resolution it showed. As things stand, Austria in our opinion is seriously menaced. If Russia succeeds in unchaining the Revolution in Hungary, the Austrian army will find itself between two fires. Austria having declined to take any active part in the Eastern Question, cannot, therefore, expect that England should involve herself in a war to defend the Emperor's possessions in Italy. Should the war spread so far as to draw in the East and threaten Egypt, or should

Napoleon be insane enough to attack Belgium, we should be compelled to step in. That Germany can rise to a policy of initiative, and pluck up courage to take independent action against France, remains to be seen, but we shall only believe it when we see it. We hold it downright impossible that the German Diet should be able to follow a firm policy towards France and Russia. We shall rejoice to be convinced of the contrary. If Prussia could only be brought to face the danger calmly, Germany would be strong enough to check in the bud the dream of a French universal monarchy, before a Russian army were put in motion. Nobody believes, however, that Germany can *act*, and least of all do we. To embark with such an uncertain ally on a war which we should have to conduct alone, will never enter our heads. The present Tory Ministry is as Austrian as it dare be. What that means, we Liberals found out at the last elections. The warm support given to our opponents in Ireland by the Roman Catholics, arises simply from the conviction of the Holy See that no Ministry can be imagined more favourable to Austria than the present one. Nevertheless, this Ministry has been unable to do anything beyond declaring our neutrality. It would be a very different thing if Protestant Germany were to resolve to intervene unanimously in the contest. In that case we might expect to see a change in this country which would enable us to co-operate for the speedy termination of the war. "Aide-toi, et Dieu t'aidera." The strong never want allies.'

London: June 4, 1859.

Lord Clarendon, who hitherto has expressed the warmest sympathies for Austria of all the British statesmen of the Liberal party, said to me yesterday evening:

'Everybody here has expected and hoped that the Aus-

trian arms would have shown their superiority from the first. For nothing but the Austrian Emperor's confidence in the valour of his army could have determined him to abandon his political advantage and take upon himself the odium of attack. We expected that the Austrian columns would press forward without halting to Turin, take there a *position à cheval*, and prevent the French at once from crossing Mont Cenis and landing at Genoa. Not one of all these things has happened. The French had time given them to effect a junction with the Piedmontese, and the Austrians committed a political blunder only to get into a strategical scrape. Nobody can understand the slowness of the Austrian movements, or the carelessness that allowed Garibaldi to snatch the advantages he did with his miserable bands. The victorious bulletins so cleverly compiled on the part of Sardinia and France seriously damage the prestige of the Austrian army. *Reconnaissances* like that which led to the battle of Montebello are antiquated. Neither Napoleon I. nor Wellington ever undertook any movements of that kind. How Victor Emmanuel could ever have been allowed to win in person his laurels at Palestro, is quite as inexcusable as it is inexplicable. Success is everything nowadays. The slowness of the army is of a piece with the negligence of the Austrian Government, who leave their embassy in London without any news and abandon the field to the enemy—who spare no telegrams—forgetting that it is the first impression that decides everything in this country. If Austria, contrary to expectation, does not show herself strong enough to defend her possessions in Italy, the maintenance of the *status quo ante bellum* will be impossible. The separation of Belgium from Holland is a precedent which will be quoted to justify the severance of the Lombardo-Venetian Kingdom from Austria.'

I naturally urged everything which could be said in defence of Austria's policy and conduct of the war, and insisted in particular on the fact that England herself, by her proposals of mediation, had prevented a rapid march on Turin. The reason of Count Buol's resignation was new to Lord Clarendon. People here had erroneously ascribed Russian sympathies to this statesman, and not imagined that, on the contrary, it was his too long cherished wish of co-operating with England that had occasioned his retirement.

The 'Times' returns again to-day to German policy. The article only confirms the accuracy with which Lord Wodehouse recently expounded to me the view taken by the great majority of his countrymen.

London: June 13, 1859.

The friends of Austria are indignant at Gyulai's blunder as reported in the accounts of the battle of Magenta. They declare that the general who so wantonly and unnecessarily sacrificed his brave troops, deserves to be tried by court-martial.

Meanwhile Napoleon is hastening to reap the political fruits of his unexpected and dearly purchased victory. His order of the day to the army of the 8th, like his proclamation on entering Milan to the inhabitants of Lombardy, might be recommended as patterns to the compilers of Gyulai's bulletins. The proclamation is cleverly adapted to pacify and gain over public opinion in England. As Lord Derby said to me yesterday, it has made an impression even on the most determined enemies of Bonapartism. Nobody can wonder at this, for Napoleon is undeniably sincere in his wish to terminate as soon as possible this unjust war. On the one hand, he is anxious not to hazard his dearly bought successes, and, on the other hand, the threatening attitude of Germany

warns him to make peace. Lombardy is not yet conquered, nor the Austrian army's power of resistance yet broken. Nobody knows that better than the French Emperor, whom all the jubilation of hired journalists cannot blind to the fact that his crown was at stake on the battle-field of Magenta.

Persigny tells me that his Emperor will return at once to Paris, to hand over the supreme command to the new Marshal, MacMahon, and do his best to arrange a direct understanding with Austria. This sanguine diplomatist regards such an understanding as mere child's play. Lombardo-Venetia must be declared independent, and a German dynasty installed at Milan. Indemnifications for the Austrian Emperor would easily be found. My question whether the Danubian Principalities were thought of in that respect, was answered in the affirmative. Persigny added, however, that those alone were not enough; another and most acceptable compensation would be found. As to where it was to be found, he declined to tell me.

Victor Emmanuel, in his proclamation of the 9th, leaves open, as did Napoleon, the question of an annexation of Lombardy to Piedmont. The French proclamation simply recommends Lombardy to organise herself militarily and place her forces at the disposal of the King of Sardinia. The Liberal party here does not appear to desire the annexation.

London: June 15, 1859.

The Blue-book, laid by Lord Malmesbury *in extremis* on the table of the House of Lords,[1] contains 535 documents, many of which have not hitherto been printed. The study of them will confirm the conviction that the ex-Minister of Foreign Affairs, though animated by the best intentions, was

[1] Correspondence respecting the affairs of Italy, January to May 1859.

not altogether equal to his difficult task. With a little more firmness and consistency he might perhaps have been able to prevent the war, as he sincerely wished to do. At any rate, it was unnecessary to allow Napoleon to throw the odium of a breach of the peace on Austria. Deplorable as may have been the precipitation of the Austrian ultimatum, it cannot be denied that it was indirectly provoked by Lord Malmesbury. The last effort at mediation on the part of England could not possibly, as Lord Malmesbury must have known, have been accepted by the Austrian Cabinet. In the same manner, France would have given way, and compelled Sardinia to give way, had Malmesbury spoken out, at the right time, with the same firmness as he did when it was too late. All these reflections, however, belong, like the Derby Ministry itself, to history.

The Palmerston-Russell Cabinet, now in process of formation, has been strengthened by the accession of Gladstone, although the latter had opposed the vote of want of confidence which caused the fall of the Derby Administration. The anti-Austrian colour of the new Ministry has thus been heightened. Nobody entertains a doubt that the Ministry will make it their task to effect the reorganisation of Italy on a national basis. The difficulties that await Lord John Russell in that respect are stated in to-day's 'Times.' 'Republics, states, federations, municipalities,' says the City paper to the regenerators of Italy, 'are all dreams. The only reality is the man who holds an army in a leash and can launch it on a continent, who not only liberates cities, but can keep them at his will. . . .'

The battle, now in course of preparation under the personal leadership of the two Emperors, will perhaps decide more than the future of Italy. If the Emperor Francis

Joseph succeeds in beating the Franco-Sardinian army, and thereby once more checking the Revolution, the downfall of Bonapartism is inevitable. If, on the contrary, Napoleon wins, he will at least make the attempt to surprise Austria by thoroughly moderate terms of peace. If the key of Austria's military position lies on the Mincio, the secret of her moral power must be looked for on the Tiber. The evacuation of Bologna and Ancona prepares undeniable embarrassments for France. It is notorious that the Duc de Gramont was sent from Alexandria to Rome, to convey to the Pope the most solemn promises of protection from Napoleon. Pius IX. pointed to the crucifix, and answered that he stood under the protection of the Crucified One, and needed no other protector. This answer will have convinced the Emperor that the Prince of the Church represents a power beyond the reach of armies. A rupture with Rome is certainly not on Napoleon's programme. The rumour that he had had the apartments of Pius VII. at Fontainebleau got ready for his successor, is not worth noticing. There is far more reason to suppose that the French Cabinet will endeavour to settle the Roman question by a private understanding with Austria. For this, if for no other reason, well-informed persons consider it highly probable that Napoleon, in the event of his conquering Austria, will build a golden bridge for his adversary.

London: June 20, 1859.

Prince Paul Esterházy is expected here to-morrow. He privately informed the Austrian Ambassador of his intention of coming here, adding emphatically that he had no mission, and only wished to see his old friends again.

Count Rechberg has not made any mention to Count Apponyi, either officially or privately, of the Prince's visit.

Nevertheless, a certain political importance is naturally ascribed to the presence of a statesman who has played here such a prominent part in his time. The objections urged in competent quarters against this visit have remained unheeded.

The agitator Kossuth has gone to Genoa, to hatch there with Klapka the insurrection in Hungary. This is their way at Paris of localising the war in Italy! In the City some importance is attached to this journey, as is shown by an article in to-day's 'Times.' It is to be hoped that the mobilisation of the Prussian army, and Count Rechberg's visit to the Imperial headquarters in company with the Prussian Ambassador, will checkmate these plans in time. The Berlin correspondent of the 'Times' does justice in eloquent terms to the sound intentions of the Prussian Cabinet. This is all the more gratifying, since at this critical moment no efforts are being spared to prevent, by means of malicious insinuations, the union of the German Governments.

The French Cabinet, since Lord Derby's retirement from office, has struck another key, with a view to making practical advances to Lord Palmerston. Fooled by these flatteries, the Government here are now hoping to divert Napoleon from the Russian alliance. Nothing, however, is said of recalling the fleet from the Mediterranean; on the contrary, no less than fifteen ships of war have been despatched during the last few days to Gibraltar; whether by the orders of the late or the present Ministry, I have not been able to ascertain. At all events, the Conservative party, whose foreign policy meets with much approval since the publication of the last Blue-book, are fully conscious of the task before them. They will keep a sharp watch over their successors. Any open espousal of the cause of France and Italy is hardly to be feared. Of the sixteen members of the present Cabinet, only two, Palmerston and

Russell, either have or pretend to have any confidence in the liberation policy of France. All the other Ministers incline to what is called here the German view of the present crisis.

The Prince Consort to Count Vitzthum.

(Autograph.)

Buckingham Palace: June 24, 1859.

MY DEAR COUNT,—I return you with my best thanks Beust's answer[1] to Gortschakoff's churlish effusion (*Flegelei*). It is excellent, and ought to be published here if possible. I only miss, in his just rebuke of the insolence of calling the Bund 'une combinaison purement et exclusivement défensive,' a worthy and indignant protest against calling Germany 'une combinaison' at all. The Bund is after all simply the representation of Germany (*die äussere Form Deutschlands*).

Yours faithfully,

ALBERT.

London: July 3, 1859.

The Prussian proposals of mediation have at length, on the 1st inst., been despatched from Berlin. Their bearer is probably Bernstorff, who is expected here to-morrow. As to their contents nothing is known, either at the Foreign Office or the Austrian Embassy. Thus much only transpires, that these proposals are to be first communicated at London and St. Petersburg, before being sent to Paris or the French headquarters. The reception that awaits them here is a matter of pure conjecture. The present Ministers are observing the greatest reserve, particularly towards German diplomatists.

The Liberal party consider the military successes of Napoleon so decisive, and have such unbounded confidence in the superiority of the French arms, that they regard the Italian question as settled on the lines of the programme of 'free

[1] See the text of this despatch in Count Beust's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 260. Stuttgart, 1877.

from the Alps to the Adriatic.' They comfort themselves for the increase of power thus acquired by France by regarding Napoleon simply as a useful instrument for expelling the Austrians. All they desire is that the military part of this expulsion may be completed as speedily and with as little disturbance as possible. They flatter themselves that they will be able to induce the French Emperor to conclude a permanent peace as soon as his cannon have razed the ramparts of Mantua and Verona.

Prince Gortschakoff had promised Napoleon to leave him a free hand in Italy. Lord Palmerston seems willing to go farther, by giving active if only indirect support, under the cover of neutrality, to the Italian programme of the French Emperor.

'According to our reckoning,' said Lord Wodehouse to me, 'in four months we shall not see a single Austrian in Italy.'

'According to ours,' I replied, 'in three months the Austrian army will re-enter Milan.'

The one calculation is manifestly as improbable as the other. My object, however, was fully gained, and I succeeded in shaking to some extent the young Under Secretary of State's incredible confidence. Lamentable as may be the failure of the Austrian attack at Solferino, it is clear that the dearly purchased victory of the allies has weakened the conquerors not less than the conquered. Persigny himself admits that 12,000 French were disabled, while the Piedmontese lost on that bloody day 320 officers, or 100 more than their ally. To judge from the experiences of the campaign of 1848, the difficulties of the allies are only just beginning, while Austria's chances of retrieving her defeat must proportionately increase. Palmerston's favourite hope

of *strengthening* Austria by depriving her of her Italian provinces, will not be attained so soon after all. And yet this hope forms in reality the premises from which the policy of the present English Government must be judged. They deprecate, above all, as premature, any negotiation which might obstruct Napoleon in the execution of his mission as a liberator.

The Prussian proposals of mediation come, therefore, either too soon or too late. If these proposals are found to be specifically Prussian, and not previously concerted with Austria, they will be at once rejected. The British Government will not only not support them at Paris, but even recommend their refusal. If, on the contrary, they are found to emanate from Austria and Prussia conjointly, there is a likelihood of their being considered. Meanwhile, Napoleon would gain time to effect his military settlement of the question; after which negotiations would be carefully spun out, and every effort made to prevent the active intervention of Prussia. Consistently with these premises, the Ministers here blame in private the placing of an army of observation on the Rhine, which they regard as a challenge to France. They would have objected far less to the concentration of a federal German army in Tyrol. What they dread above everything is a Franco-German war, which would lead, in their opinion, to a total alteration of the map of Europe, and give an impulse to the policy of Tilsit. Behind the doubt as to the power of Prussia and the German Confederation to withstand France, there plainly lurks the fear lest Austria, in alliance with Germany, might frustrate Lord Palmerston's plans in Italy. Neither at the French nor the Sardinian Embassy is the gravity of the situation disguised. A bad end is feared should the war not be concluded before Prussia and Germany step in.

All that glitters is not gold. The *mise en scène* has been arranged with all the splendour of modern decorative painting, but things are going on behind the scenes which cause serious uneasiness to the sincere friends of Napoleon. The France of to-day is no longer the France of Napoleon I. The people have become more sober and calculating. The *respice finem* cannot be deafened by the Bonapartist shout of victory. The old parties have united in the hour of danger. The Republicans of all shades are holding firmly together here. The French refugees, like Mazzini, expect no real advantage for 'freedom' from Napoleon's victories. On the contrary, a Committee has been formed here, which includes the names of Louis Blanc, Ledru Rollin, Colonel Charras, and Felix Pyat; in other words, the moderate as well as the Red Republicans, the victors and the vanquished in the June conflict. The members of this Committee are said to have sworn to accomplish by all the means in their power the downfall of the system now weighing upon France. It is even asserted that this movement is fomented by the Orleanists. Should Napoleon not be able to return home soon, and announce the complete realisation of his programme, a second edition of the Mallet conspiracy is not an impossible contingency. The Liberal party, as the united Orleanists and Republicans style themselves, have already started a weekly paper, 'La Revue Indépendante.' Napoleon is playing a more dangerous game than he appears to imagine. The German army has just as great a chance of 'liberating' France, as the French army has of liberating Italy.

From England there is nothing to expect, but also nothing to fear. Lord Palmerston is endeavouring to forestall Prince Gortschakoff at Paris, in the hope of preventing a Franco-Russian alliance. The Opposition are too weak openly

to combat this policy, which is disguised under the mask of neutrality. Short-lived as the present Ministry seems likely to be, no new crisis is to be looked for until next February. A reconstitution of the Government, with Lord John Russell as Prime Minister, is possible. In the Tory camp such a result would not be unacceptable, because they would then hold the fate of the Cabinet in their hands. In the hope of this, the Opposition, if no particular *contretemps* occur, will use every effort to displace Palmerston first of all. Cobden has refused to join the Cabinet. He has promised them, it is true, his support, but he means to maintain not only his independence, but also an armed neutrality. Milner Gibson joins them in his stead, and the Ministry will consist of only fifteen instead of sixteen members.

London: July 11, 1859.

The meeting at Villafranca, which is to take place this morning, plainly indicates a turning point of the present crisis. The choice of the place is a compliment to the Emperor Francis Joseph. It will be remembered that, immediately after crossing the Mincio, Marshal Niel occupied Villafranca. Later on he evacuated it as untenable, in consequence of the Austrian offensive movement, which the French had interpreted as a sign of a fresh battle. The meeting, consequently, is held under the protection of the Austrian arms; and the conquered receives a visit from the conqueror. Will this meeting modify the view still prevalent the day before yesterday? It is too soon to learn anything about this as yet. Considering the attitude of the Cabinets here and at St. Petersburg, it will not be surprising if Austria comes to the conclusion that she will be better able to protect her interests by a direct understanding with France than by being represented at a Congress. As regards the French propo-

sitions, all as yet is mere conjecture. That Napoleon could agree to a peace not securing the fulfilment of his programme, namely the freedom of Italy from the Alps to the Adriatic, is considered here to be impossible. The 'Morning Post' declares that Napoleon will bring back his victorious army to France, and arrange the fate of the peninsula at a Congress in common with the other Great Powers. The 'Times' insists that the treaties of 1815, so far as Italy is concerned, are cancelled. It is very easy for English newspaper writers to talk. In point of fact, the position of the French ruler is very different to that ascribed to him by English politicians. He is by no means master of the situation. The quarrel with Rome has reached a very serious pitch. The consequences of a rupture have been very clearly laid before the conqueror of Solferino in an address signed by 113 French ecclesiastics. The papal anathema already launched against Victor Emmanuel is said to have threatened also the Emperor Napoleon. Moreover, the republican party has raised its head in the large towns, now destitute of troops, and the middle classes are again trembling before the red spectre. The campaign has cost the French army—to say nothing of the Sardinian one, which is almost broken up—in round numbers 100,000 men in dead, sick, and wounded. Napoleon I. understood how to spare his *corps d'élite*. Napoleon III. has recklessly sacrificed them. The Guards and Zouaves had suffered so heavily at Magenta and Solferino, that it was absolutely necessary to fill up the gaps from the line regiments, the colonels of which are complaining loudly that their best men are taken from them, and turned into Zouaves.

'Croyez-moi,' said to me yesterday the old General Flahault, in his youth one of the favourite aides-de-camp of

Napoleon I., 'croyez-moi, on n'offre pas un armistice le lendemain d'une victoire sans en avoir grandement besoin.'

London: July 12, 1859.

On the 6th I dined with several of my colleagues at Lord John Russell's. After dinner the Foreign Secretary invited Count Apponyi to a conversation which scarcely lasted ten minutes. For the first time Lord John spoke to the Austrian Ambassador about proposals of peace, and communicated to him in the strictest confidence six points, which, emanating from Persigny's private correspondence with Walewski, must have received the preliminary sanction of the French Emperor.

These six points were written down on a quarto sheet which I did not see. They were told to me verbally, and quoted from memory their substance is as follows:

1. L'Italie sera rendue à elle-même.

2. Les états de l'Italie formeront une confédération sous la présidence souveraine du Pape.

3. Agrandissement de la Sardaigne (Lombardie, Duchés).

4. La Vénétie formera un état indépendant sous un archiduc.

5. Des réformes administratives seront recommandées au Saint Père.

6. Un congrès européen réglera les délimitations territoriales d'après les vœux des populations et les droits acquis.

Apponyi's question, whether the British Cabinet would accept and officially support these bases, was answered evasively. It was suggested to him, however, to lay these proposals before his Court, as a confidential communication from the French to the English Government. Lord John

advised the conclusion of an armistice for fourteen days, in case Vienna consented. The Austrian Ambassador took this communication *ad referendum*, but did not promise any result from it. The Secretary of State appeared to share this impression, but remarked that, if Austria declined all negotiations on this basis and compelled the French to attack the fortresses, the Paris Cabinet would not consider themselves bound by Point IV., but would deal with Venetian territory as they thought fit.

Before the answer to Apponyi's telegram of the 7th could arrive here, the news came on the evening of that day of the conclusion of the armistice. On the 8th followed the telegraphic confirmation of this news. Early on the 9th arrived Rechberg's answer in cipher, dated from Verona on the 8th. For want of a direct cipher this despatch had been forwarded first to Vienna, and was transmitted hither from there by Baron Werner in words to this effect:

'Le Comte Rechberg me charge de vous dire que nous regardons les propositions françaises comme inacceptables et que nous n'avons accepté l'armistice que pour des raisons purement militaires.'

On Sunday, the 10th, Persigny surprised Count Apponyi with a visit, which was returned the next day. The resu t was that the French Ambassador did not consider the six points as the last word, but expected counter-propositions. He insisted nevertheless on the Liberation programme.

In the mean time the Austrian Ambassador had been empowered by telegraph on the 10th to communicate the negative answer of his Court to the British Government. This was done in writing, as Lord John had left town.

Persigny was likewise informed by telegraph the day before yesterday that the Emperor Napoleon would propose on

the 11th, at the Conference at Villafranca, the three following points as a basis for negotiation :

1. Confédération italienne sous la présidence souveraine du Pape.

2. Cession de la Lombardie à la Sardaigne.

3. La Vénétie formera un état indépendant sous un archiduc.

Simultaneously, the French Ambassador was instructed to nquire whether the British Government were prepared to support these three points.

In the absence of Lord John, Persigny hastened to Palmerston. The Premier, forgetting his seventy-five years, had his horse saddled at once, hastened to Pembroke Lodge, and immediately on his return wrote to Count Persigny, to say that Lord John and he were prepared to support the three points. But since the Queen was at Aldershot, and her approval was formally necessary, the English Ministers requested that the interview at Villafranca might be postponed.

This request, as is known, was not complied with. The British Ministers learned this afternoon at one o'clock, through the French Ambassador, that the Preliminaries of peace had been signed without England's intervention and under far more favourable conditions for Austria.

Anyone who compares these Preliminaries, irrespective of the secret articles, with the three points, which Napoleon only the evening before had asked England to support, will understand the astonishment of the British Ministers. At any rate the Emperor of Austria has manœuvred more successfully in diplomacy than he did on the battle-field. If Austria retains Venetia with the line of the Mincio and the Quadrilateral, she retains her strategical position in Italy.

The peace will please nobody. Sardinia fancied she had

the Lombardo-Venetian Kingdom, Tuscany, Parma, and Modena already in her hand. The gift of Lombardy at the hands of France seems therefore but a meagre recompense for the heavy sacrifices of the war. France likewise will not be content with the results. 100,000 men have been sacrificed, and the country has been most heavily burdened, in order to win Lombardy for the King of Sardinia. The programme of liberation, bruited at all the street corners, remains unaccomplished, and the Italian question unsettled.

People in England, notwithstanding all their egotism, feel deeply the humiliation inflicted on their Government by this unexpected proceeding. Persigny shrugs his shoulders, and says, 'Nos amis montrent un peu de mauvaise humeur, mais cela passera.'

The peace of Villafranca has unsettled much and settled nothing, beyond affording the spectacle of a French army intoxicated by victory, a dangerous instrument in the hands of the adventurous Imperator, who has shown himself as such to astonished Europe on the battle-field.

London: July 21, 1859.

From the annexes to the Austrian circular of the 16th, I gather that it was a question originally not of six but of seven points which France had requested England to support. The error, for which my informant is responsible, has now lost all importance, since the Preliminaries have not actually been concluded on this basis.

The circular and the Emperor's manifesto of the 15th will create bad blood. Prussia is accused of having abandoned her old ally in the hour of danger, and thereby compelled her to consent to a disadvantageous peace.

A misunderstanding lies here, which has not yet been ex-

plained. Count Bernstorff indignantly repudiates the charge, and declares that Prussia has been ready to intervene on behalf of Austria's territorial position as established by treaties. Persigny insists, on the contrary, that Prussia accepted the seven French points, and declared moreover that Austria, if she rejected them, would not be able to count on the support of her German allies.

The riddle would probably be solved if we possessed the text of the autograph private letter which Prince Napoleon delivered on the 12th inst. to the Emperor Francis Joseph.

The Preliminaries of Villafranca were signed not on the 11th but the 12th. The Emperor Napoleon's private letter just referred to probably contained the real or pretended proof of the assertion that France offered more favourable terms than those which the mediating Powers would have proposed.

How great was the conqueror's need of peace, is made clear by comparing the draft delivered by Prince Napoleon with the Preliminaries as actually signed. In that draft the third point ran as follows:

'S.M. l'Empereur d'Autriche cède à l'Empereur des Français ses droits sur la Lombardie que l'Empereur Napoléon conformément aux vœux de la population cède au Roi de Sardaigne.'

Thus then early on the morning of the 12th the line of the Mincio with Mantua and Verona had been diplomatically reconquered, and, in addition to that, the false statement, that the cession of Lombardy to Sardinia was made 'in conformity with the wishes of the population,' struck out.

The paragraph relating to Tuscany and Modena ran in the draft thus:

'Les Empereurs feront tous leurs efforts, sans cependant

avoir recours aux armes, pour faire rentrer le Grand Duc de Toscane et le Duc de Modène dans leurs états.'

The amendment successfully insisted on by Austria

'Le Grand Duc de Toscane et le Duc de Modène rentrent dans leurs états'—

is at any rate more dignified and precise.

With regard also to the reforms to be recommended to the Pope, the original French draft had to yield to the simpler and almost meaningless version of the Preliminaries. 'Réformes indispensables' is a vague expression, and must appear so especially to those who had already counted on the secularisation of the States of the Church.

The assertion made by English newspapers, that Victor Emmanuel only acceded to the armistice, and not to the treaty of Villafranca, and was, therefore, still at war with Austria, is wholly imaginary. The King of Sardinia has ratified that treaty with his own hand, though not actually countersigned by his Ministers, in the following terms: 'Je ratifie cette convention ci-dessus en tout ce qui me concerne.'

The Austrian courier, who arrived here yesterday, brought with him, in addition to the circular of the 16th and its annexes, a further despatch of Count Rechberg's of the 17th. The Austrian Government acknowledges therein that the views entertained by Esterházy and Apponyi as to the policy to be expected from Palmerston and Lord John Russell had been verified only too well. The concluding sentence reminds one of the times of Schwarzenberg, and is to this effect: 'Nous n'avons pour le moment absolument rien à communiquer au cabinet britannique. Nous lui laissons à lui-même le soin de mesurer les gains et les pertes qu'il a retiré de l'abstention à laquelle il s'est condamné.'

London: July 21, 1859.

In consequence of the slender agreement prevailing between the members of the Palmerston-Russell Ministry, the latter will practically avoid in Parliament all questions of principle. The Opposition meanwhile have taken the opportunity at a public dinner of celebrating their successes at the last election. The 'Times' concludes from the speeches of Lord Derby, Lord Malmesbury, and Disraeli, that the Conservatives can only play a part in Opposition. In any case, Malmesbury has the majority of the country and that of the present Cabinet on his side, if he firmly resists the notion of submitting the treaty of Villafranca to the supplementary sanction of a European Congress. The daily press also is, with a few exceptions, convinced that England, who has taken no part in the war, must decline all responsibility for the peace concluded in haste without her co-operation. Even Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell have hitherto given official expression to this view. However, those who suspect the private designs of these Ministers point to the 'Morning Post,' which is considered a French organ. The Walewski-Persigny intrigue, which is defended in that paper, is well known in Vienna. These two men would like to bring about, against Napoleon's expressed promise, a Congress which Austria will know how to prevent.

Neither the Austrian manifesto nor Napoleon's speech on the 19th to the Sénate and Corps Législatif at St. Cloud have helped to solve the riddle of Villafranca. Complaint is made, in particular, that no previous understanding has taken place between Austria and France to explain their motives for concluding peace. While the Emperor Francis Joseph justifies the conclusion of the peace, disadvantageous for himself, on the ground of the passive attitude of his natural allies, Napo-

leon, on the contrary, seeks to excuse himself for the non-fulfilment of his promises and the sudden termination of the war by the threatening attitude of these very allies of Austria.

The English *Italianissimi* had been declaring as late as the 7th in Berlin that so long as an Austrian was beyond the Alps, no peace was to be thought of. They now flatter themselves that the seed of insurrection, which has been scattered broadcast, will spring up in all parts of the peninsula, and thus prove by events that the Preliminaries of Villafranca offer no basis for a practical settlement. Very different is the judgment of Italian statesmen who do not see the state of things in their country through Cavour's spectacles. 'If the Emperor Napoleon,' said one of these men to me, 'has recognised at length that the encouragement of revolution in Italy is bound to entail the gravest danger on his own country and his own throne, 40,000 reliable troops in Upper Italy and the skilful distribution of 40,000 piastres among the leaders of the revolutionary party would suffice to remove all fear of serious movements.'

London: July 25, 1859.

The Prussian circular despatch of the 21st has confirmed, but not explained, the contradiction I pointed out in my letter of the same day. 'Qui trompe-t-on ici?' asks the 'Journal des Débats,' and seems to intimate that in the comedy of errors, now being played on the world's stage, the deceiver of to-day must take the part of the deceived to-morrow. Prussia must be acquitted of the suspicion of having concerted with England proposals of mediation more unfavourable for Austria than the terms offered by France. Lord John Russell himself has undertaken to furnish proof of this. In his despatch of the 7th he instructs Lord Bloomfield to explain the refusal of the proposals brought over by Count

Bernstorff, on the ground that the British Government could not take part in a mediation based on the *status quo ante bellum* of Austria in Italy. In these instructions the demand that Napoleon should terminate the war without realising his programme, is described in plain terms as an 'affront.' When Lord John adds that England was obliged to the Prussian Government for their attitude hitherto, and for the overtures they had made, and would prove her gratitude by exhibiting equal frankness, nobody knows better than Count Bernstorff what value to attach to such phrases. The English Cabinet did not give the slightest hint to the Prussian Minister either of the seven or of the three French points which were approved on the 10th. It was not till the 11th, when Bernstorff took the Foreign Secretary to task for the falsehoods spread about by Persigny, that Lord John Russell communicated to him a telegram from Lord Bloomfield, stating that the French Ambassador had submitted to Baron Schleinitz four conditions (the cession of Lombardy, Venetia independent under an Archduke, a Congress, and an Amnesty) under which France was ready to conclude peace. The Prussian Minister, however, declined to lay these conditions before the Prince Regent, as being unsuitable.

Lamentable as is the partiality displayed by the two leading ministers of England at this crisis, all the brighter appears the correct attitude of the Crown.

The news of the acceptance of the three French conditions, subject to the Queen's sanction, was received on the 10th at the pavilion at Aldershot with the most decided disapproval. As a constitutional sovereign, her Majesty could not, of course, reject forthwith the French proposals against the advice of her Prime Minister and Foreign Secretary. She appealed, however, to the Cabinet, knowing well that among its fifteen

members the majority would vote for the Queen against Palmerston and Russell. But the matter never reached that point, for the agreement of Villafranca made all deliberation unnecessary. For the future, however, it will always be important to know that the right feeling of her Majesty and the well-known opinions of Prince Albert do not allow themselves to be swayed by Ministerial prejudices.

Persigny's visit to St. Cloud, which had been concerted with Lord Palmerston, is a final attempt to resuscitate the idea of a Congress. The Ambassador will return without accomplishing his object.

Napoleon III. needs, as a banker who knows France well remarked to me, at least two or three years of peace. The losses of the French army have hitherto been under-estimated, just as their strength and readiness for war is generally overrated. Malakoff had, on the Rhine, barely 80,000 men, whose only reserve consisted of about 80,000 recruits, who were to join him on September 1. How could he have checked with this force the German armies if the latter had taken the offensive at the right moment? An English statesman, who has just come from Paris, goes so far as to assure me that a German army of 100,000 men, pushed forward into Tyrol, would have been enough to checkmate the Second Empire.

The financial difficulties of the moment seem to be greater even than the military ones. As Prince Albert predicted to me some months ago, this last war, in consequence of everything having to be paid for in cash, has swallowed up sums which have well-nigh exhausted the rich country.

'*Raison de plus*,' remarked a pessimist, 'for determining the Emperor to seek an excuse for a new war, which might bring something to France.'

London: July 28, 1859.

Considering the ill-feeling exhibited by the press on both sides of the Channel, it is not to be wondered at that rumours should be current of a coming demonstration, intended to revive sunken confidence, and assure the maintenance of general peace. People talk of a repetition of the Emperor's visit to Osborne. Lord John Russell assures me he knows nothing of any such project. A Liberal member of Parliament went farther, and said that England had not yet sunk so low as that. Prince Paul Esterházy, who, after a stay of several weeks in London, had accepted a gracious invitation by the Queen to Osborne House, left that residence only a few days ago, on the 25th. He tells me that during his visit of some days to the Isle of Wight, he did not notice the smallest preparation for an interview with the Emperor Napoleon, nor had any intimation of such a visit. The Prince intends to leave London to-day, in order to return to Vienna through Paris by order of his Court.

Lord John Russell is to make his promised statement this evening in the House of Commons in explanation of the Treaty of Villafranca. His despatch of June 22 has already been laid on the table of the House, and is published in to-day's 'Times.' He is to communicate also to Parliament, after obtaining the sanction of the Cabinet, his despatch of July 7 to Lord Bloomfield, declining, as inopportune, the well-known Prussian proposals of mediation. The two papers contain passages which will not be read in Paris exactly with satisfaction.

There are two points in particular which are closely scanned by those who regard a war between England and France as sooner or later probable. The fisheries on the coast of Newfoundland have lately given rise to differences,

the peaceful settlement of which presents difficulties. But the chief point is Egypt, where the interests and intrigues of the Western Powers cross. Lord Palmerston is decidedly averse to M. de Lesseps' project. He pretends to regard the cutting through of the Isthmus of Suez as technically impracticable. In reality he thinks the undertaking will endanger English interests in the East. In the 14,000 workmen hired by M. de Lesseps, the English Premier perceives the germ of a French army of invasion. He is afraid that they might serve as instructors to the troops of the Viceroy, who are reckoned at 120,000 men.

London: July 30, 1859.

I will not omit to give you a brief sketch of the sitting in the House of Commons on the night of the 28th.

Lord John Russell began by laying his despatch to Lord Bloomfield of July 7 on the table of the House. This is the same despatch which was described in Berlin as a schoolboy's exercise. In a long and evidently carefully prepared speech, the Foreign Secretary expatiated on the position of affairs brought about by the interview at Villafranca. As a *captatio benevolentiæ*, his reference to the statement in the 'Moniteur,' announcing the reduction of the French land and sea forces to a peace footing, was not very happily conceived. This latest change in French policy has only increased the distrust already prevailing here. People fear reciprocity—an invitation to England to discontinue now her coast defences, if she does not wish to expose herself to the suspicion of aggressive designs. Lord John began by explaining the Preliminaries of Villafranca from his own point of view. He urged that the cession of Lombardy was not a matter in which England was called on to interfere, but that the reorganisation of Italy would deserve the consideration, and indeed the co-operation,

of the British Cabinet. He then read to the House an extract from one of Walewski's despatches addressed to Count Persigny, of which the latter had left him a copy. It related to the coming peace negotiations at Zurich, and to the hope expressed that the Powers would be able to meet in a European Congress or Conference. In regard to this Lord John declared that the British Government reserved their decision, and would in any case first await the communication of the formal instrument of peace to be concluded at Zurich. He added—and this is the main point—that England would in no event take part in any Congress on the state of Italy in which Austria and Prussia were not represented. Even then, however, Lord John will not yet give any positive assurance. He makes the participation of England in the proposed Congress dependent on a previous agreement being arrived at on certain questions of principle. To enter more closely into these questions is, however, superfluous, since Austria refuses to abandon her opposition to the idea of a Congress altogether.

Disraeli, in his reply, complained of the defective character of the Ministerial statement, and severely criticised the ambiguous manner in which Lord John had slurred over the main question. The question, he said, was, how had the Emperor of Austria come to state officially that the proposals of mediation of his natural allies were more unfavourable than the terms proposed directly by his enemy? Prussia, he continued, had purged herself by coming forward and stating that she knew nothing of such proposals having been submitted to the Emperor, but her Majesty's Government maintained a suspicious silence on the point. There was only too good reason to fear that the Ministers, blinded by their hatred of Austria, had committed the same mistake

which they committed in 1848, and which had had such fatal consequences for Italy and the peace of the world. It was clear that England, by a timely and suitable mediation, would have deserved the thanks of the two belligerent Powers, and to a certain degree have dictated the peace, the direct conclusion of which had condemned England to a serious state of isolation. Lord Palmerston's manifesto to his constituents at Tiverton was at the bottom of Napoleon's programme at Milan, and both had the same fate. In a similar state of blindness to that of the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary had sacrificed the interests of his country to his fixed idea of founding in Italy a Whig party, a sort of Brooks's Club at Florence. 'I told the noble lord,' he said, 'some years ago that the course he was recommending was one which must end in the confusion of Italy; and that if he thought the regeneration of Italy could be effected by the secret societies of that country, he would find that he was only playing the game of some great military despot, who would reap the profit.'

After this violent attack followed a statesmanlike exposition of the reasons which were bound to prevent England from taking part in the Congress, since the Preliminaries of Villafranca had left the balance of power in Europe undisturbed.

Lord Palmerston could not help confessing in plain terms that the leader of the Opposition had been accurately informed as to the negotiations preceding the conclusion of peace. He found himself obliged, therefore, to partly lift the veil which had hitherto concealed the action of the British Cabinet. He admitted that Lord John had communicated to the Austrian Ambassador a project emanating from the French Government, as to the acceptability of which Napoleon's

Ministers had not pronounced an opinion. The proceedings of the 6th and 10th are too well known to make it necessary to point out in particular the *suppressio veri* which this Ministerial confession betrays. Of course Lord Palmerston was endeavouring to put the best face he could on his policy of 1848 as well as that of 1859. The question of the Congress he represented as an open one, to be determined by circumstances.

Lord Elcho has not withdrawn his motion for an Address,[1] the object of which was to make it impossible for the Government to take part in the projected Congress, and he will be able to reckon in it on Disraeli's support.

The question whether the reduction announced by France of her land and sea forces should cause England to discontinue the measures taken for the national defence, was warmly debated yesterday in the House of Commons. The statements made by Lord Palmerston and the other Ministers, as, indeed, the whole course of the debate, leave no doubt that it has been determined to repair past neglect.

Paris: Aug. 10, 1859.

Without waiting for the adjourned debate on Lord Elcho's motion, I hastened hither from London on the evening of the 6th, so as not to miss Prince Paul Esterházy, who only intended to stay here till the 8th.

Lord Elcho's well-meant motion was not pressed to a division, and the last sitting in which the House of Commons had an opportunity of speaking out on the question of the

[1] The proposed Address stated that it would be inconsistent with the honour and dignity of the House to take part in any Conference for the purpose of settling the details of a peace the preliminaries of which had already been arranged between the two Emperors.

day before the Parliamentary vacation, passed away without any practical result. Lord Elcho was weak and showed himself ill-informed, so that the cool 'It is not true,' with which Lord John Russell interrupted him, did not fail to produce the desired impression. Attacked with very different weapons by the former Under Secretary of State, Mr. Seymour Fitzgerald, the Foreign Secretary was obliged to make references to the incidents of the 6th and 10th of July, which in no way, however, correspond with the full truth. The argument he used to show that the English Government was not justified in intervening on behalf of the principle of legitimacy in Tuscany and Modena, was significant of the standpoint of this Liberal but *doctrinaire* Minister.

The English throne, Lord John informed the House of Commons, had originated, like those of Belgium and France, in revolution, and rested on the principle of the sovereignty of the people. The advisers of the Crown could not act in opposition to the fundamental principles of the State. It is true that the Parliament of 1688 ratified the usurpation of William III., but that was done with the intention of simply giving a legal footing to the new dynasty, not in any way of shaking the monarchical principle and transplanting into England the theory of popular sovereignty. This heresy belongs to a later time. Only the partial pen of the sophist Macaulay, writing for Whig party purposes, could succeed in representing the English Revolution of 1688 as having originated in the theories which were produced by the French Revolution of 1789. It required a rare expenditure of paradoxical dialectics to make a House of Commons, created by the Reform Act of 1831, believe that they had the right to give away the crown because the aristocratic Parliament of 1688 had ratified the *fait accompli* of a change of dynasty.

All this, of course, does not prevent the fact that in the England of the present day the monarchical principle has become a matter of form. Her people are standing wholly on revolutionary soil. This was felt, indeed, to be the case before now, but it was never openly proclaimed. It has been reserved to a Lord John Russell to announce to the Queen from the Ministerial bench that she only sits upon her throne at the pleasure of the House of Commons.

Pardon me for this digression, which takes me back *in medias res*, and explains why the Austrian Cabinet has lost all touch with the present English Ministry. The Austrian Ambassador in London has actually not exchanged a word on politics with the Foreign Secretary from July 6 to August 6!

The Emperor Napoleon on his part has expressed, in somewhat lengthy conversations with Prince Esterházy and Metternich, his unconcealed displeasure with the present English Government. He complains of the patent discrepancies in the views and objects of the two leading Ministers as the main reason of his difficulty in effecting an understanding with the British Cabinet. Unquestionably, he is seriously embarrassed how to reconcile the promises made to Italy with the engagements contracted towards Austria at Villafranca. For, in fact, he can only keep the latter by failing to fulfil the former. He is evidently endeavouring to reconcile these contradictions in as plausible a manner as possible. It is idle for him to reckon on the assistance of England, who is using every effort to prevent the restoration of the expelled dynasties of Modena and Tuscany, and, if possible, to check in the bud the alliance of the three Emperors which is so dreaded in London.

The Emperor of Austria considers this act of justice to be

a matter of honour and a political necessity, since he can never feel himself secure in the possession of Venetia and the Quadrilateral until the revolution is crushed in the neighbouring States. It is not surprising that this point was most exhaustively discussed in the audiences of Prince Esterházy. The latter found Napoleon full of the most friendly feelings for the Emperor Francis Joseph and his Government. He was also able to establish the most complete accord in principle on the question of restoration, in regard to which, however, Napoleon did not conceal either from him or from Prince Metternich that the practical execution of this point was attended with great difficulties, since France was altogether opposed to any measures of force. All that Prince Esterházy obtained, was Napoleon's promise to sanction nothing in Tuscany and Modena beyond the restoration agreed on at Villafranca. Prince Paul gave me distinctly to understand that the Vienna Cabinet regarded the restoration of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and the Duke of Modena as a *sine quâ non* condition of peace. He considered that the utmost firmness and decision must be shown in Paris, not to require the same in Florence and Modena.

The only object of Count Reiset's mission to Florence was to 'work' the population in this sense. His reports, received to-day, give the prospect of a change in the direction desired.

If the restoration takes place, the Austrian Cabinet would perhaps not be disinclined to waive their objection to a Congress; at any rate, this question is still treated as an open one in Vienna.

In the instructions which Colloredo took with him to Zürich, the establishment of the Italian confederation, the part to be taken in that confederation by Venetia, and the honorary presidency of the Pope, were treated as points of

minor importance. In this respect the greatest latitude has been given to the plenipotentiaries. Colloredo has been instructed, however, all the more categorically to urge the immediate restoration of the sovereigns of Tuscany and Modena.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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